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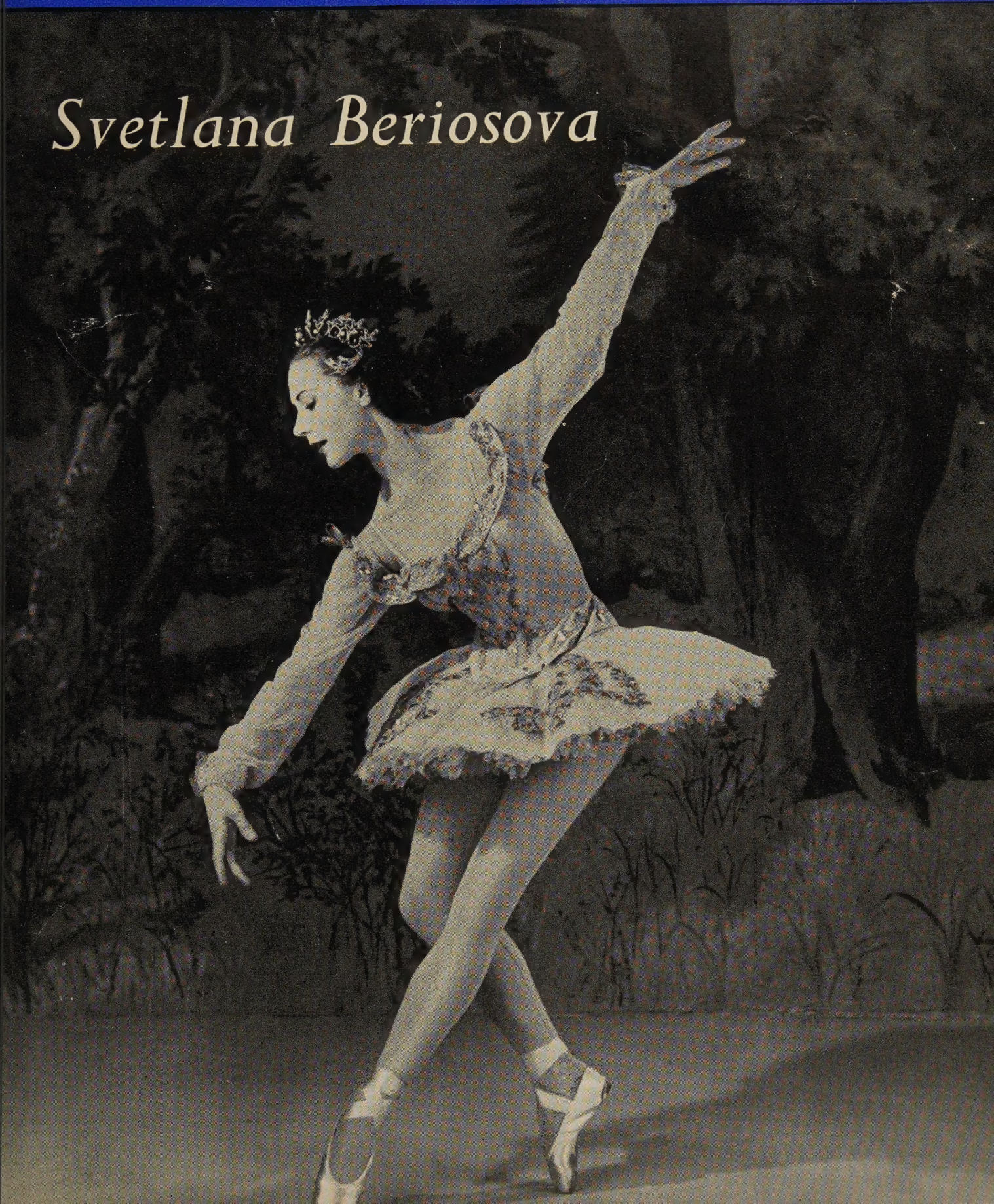

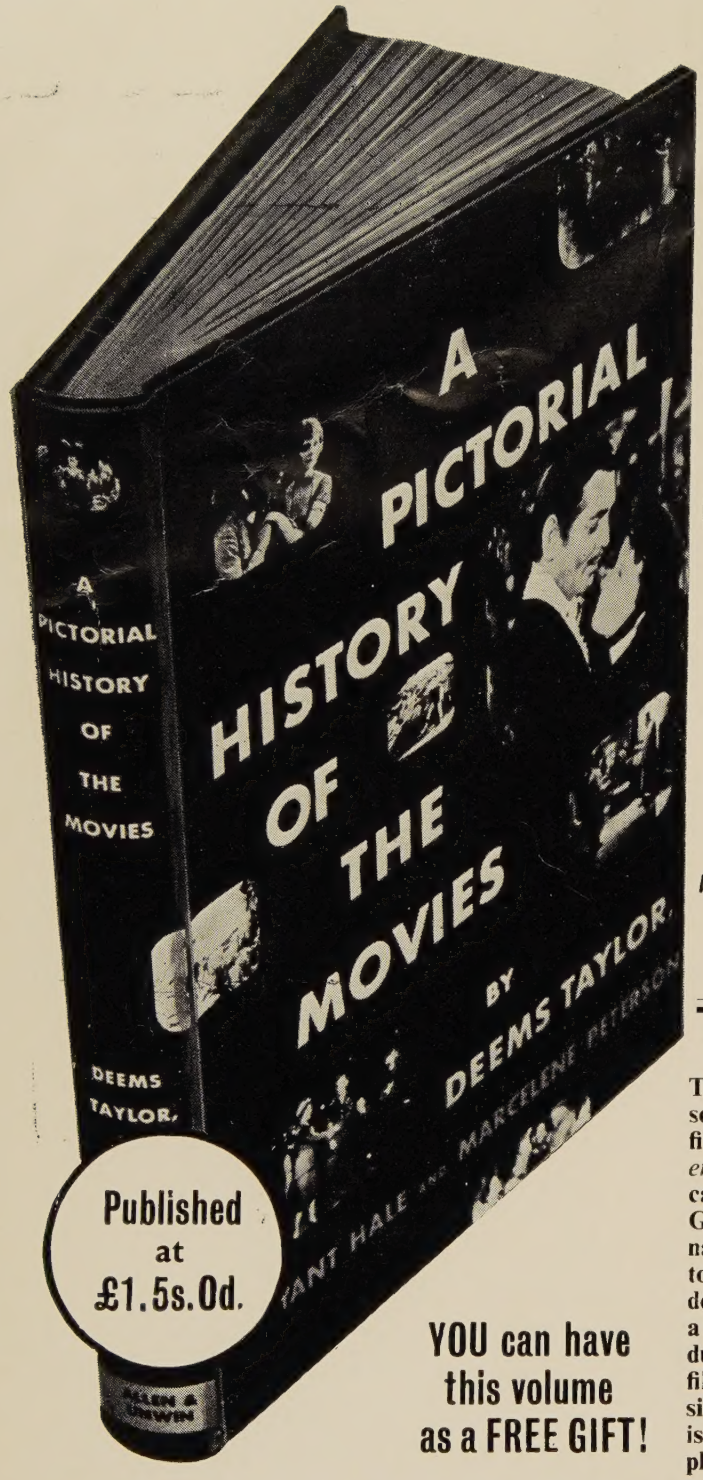

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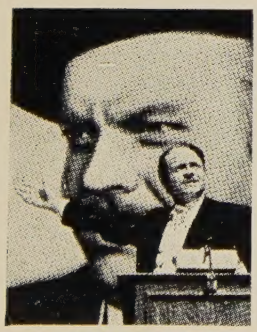

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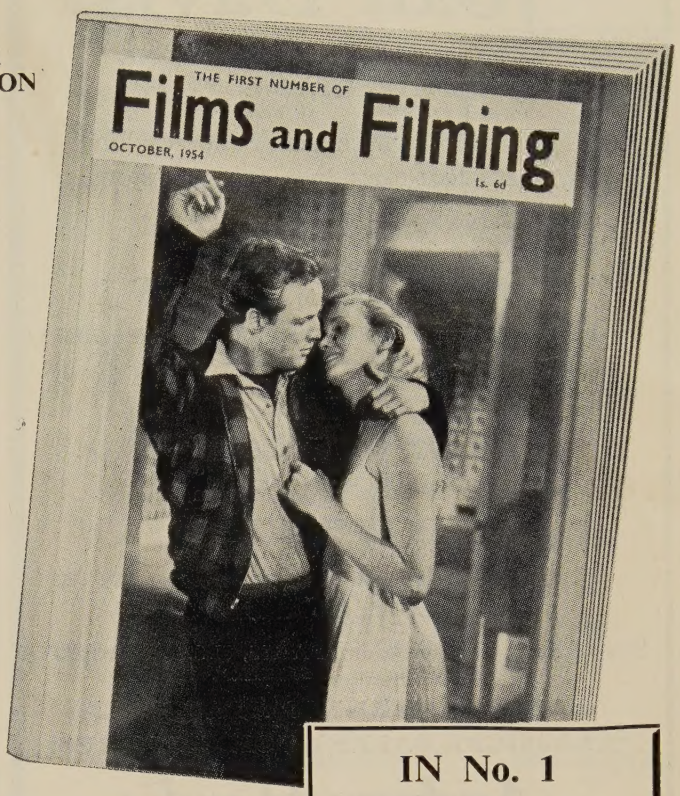

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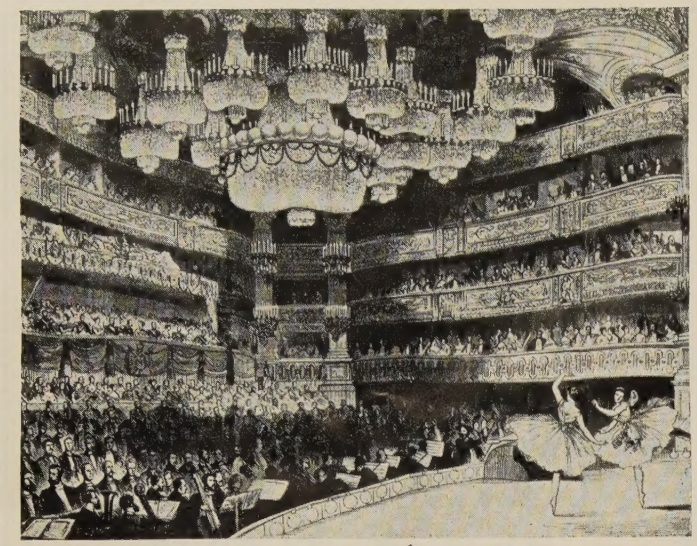

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Personality of the month

Madame Eugenie ("Mama") Toumanova, Tamara Toumanova and David Lichine during the production of the film, Tonight we Sing. *Photo: 20th Century Fox*

TAMARA TOUMANOVA

Reason: Because she cannot avoid being a dominant personality in any month in which she chooses to appear.

TOUMANOVA is back in England again and things are bound to hum. She has a personality and beauty which, whether you like them or not and it is hard to imagine that anybody does not, cannot help but create a great effect in the theatre. Toumanova first appeared in England in Les Ballets 1933 at the Savoy Theatre and in the same year, 1933, she was one of the baby ballerinas who made such a sensation during the first Col de Basil season at the Alhambra Theatre. Since then she has returned to England many times—with de Basil up to 1938, with de Cuevas after the war and more recently with Festival Ballet at the Stoll Theatre. She appeared recently as Anna Pavlova in the film *Tonight we Sing,* based on the life of Sol Hurok; she also starred in a sequence from Gene Kelly's dance film *Invitation to the Dance* which has not yet had a public showing. In her most recent film she appears as Gaby Delys and will also sing.

Even as a child fresh from Madame Preobrajenska's studio, there was never any question of Toumanova being anything other than a ballerina and a ballerina she has always remained.

As she married a famous film script-writer, she has spent most of the post-war years in Hollywood and therefore has not been attached to any particular company. This is a pity as it has not been possible for any new roles to be created for her and she mainly dances in the standard classics or in classical *pas de deux* all of which she gives with great brio. Now she is to remain with Festival Ballet for their current London season and for their six-month tour of Canada and the United States. She will dance in all the classic roles and also the title role in the new production of *La Esmeralda.*

There is a lot to be learnt from this last of the great Russian ballerinas. Her fire and attack has always had an electrifying effect on any company in which she has appeared. On the other side of the picture it may also be good for her to remain with one company for a long period of time so that she can dance in the sort of background to which she was brought-up and to which she has always given such distinction.

September 1954 Vol. 5 No. 9

Dance and Dancers

Editor: PETER WILLIAMS
Assitant Editor: CLIVE BARNES

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CHANGE IS NO REST

DURING the war we used to be harried by slogans which told us to do this and that, many of them contradicting each other, until we really did not know where we were. Nothing looked more pathetically ludicrous than to see on the walls of some town, bombed to smithereens, a war-scarred notice with the words "Stay put!".

But the war is over and the slogans have become meaningless, yet I have found in the past few months that those two words have taken on a new meaning as regards the present state of ballet. There is a great deal of shuffling about in the ballet companies of the world and many dancers are becoming restless.

There are, of course, many legitimate reasons for dancers wanting a change. Possibly they want to get married and settle down. Possibly they realise that the span of a dancer's life is exceedingly short and that they must make as much money as possible before they have to retire. These are reasons to respect and we have, and always will, make allowances for the fact that everyone has to think of the future.

Unfortunately these are not always the reason for dancers leaving companies. The films, it seems, beckon like some rosy Venusberg. Just because Moira Shearer achieved international fame and possibly a nice fat un-rouged bank balance, little Miss Snooks is certain that she can do the same thing. Miss Snooks is pretty, mind you, and she has had considerable experience in the *corps de ballet* and a few solo roles so she has, she thinks, all it takes. She forgets possibly that Shearer was a very experienced dancer before *The Red Shoes* and that it is unlikely that such success and monetary reward will be achieved twice. No, Miss Snooks does not think about that but leaves the comparative safety of her established company and goes to greet the great outdoors which she feels certain will be falling over itself to welcome her.

For a time all is wonderful and the great outdoors is happy to see her but then there comes a certain cooling-off—films are too infrequent, American musicals are not having ballet, cabaret in England is precarious, other ballet companies get less and less.

Miss Snooks therefore steels herself for the biggest humiliation of her life—she goes and asks her old company if they will take her back. They are very polite but "no" the company is full; the same answer is what she gets from every other company. Poor Miss Snooks! She takes some simple, badly paid, job; eventually marries and settles-down to becoming a house-wife.

Her story has ended happily but there are thousands which do not and all on account of the fact that dancers were dazzled by a vast salary somewhere else. The companies of this world are getting less and less and as more dancers are turned-out from the class-rooms, jobs are getting rarer. The dancer who thinks of leaving the safe confines of a company should consider all this. Many people, I know, feel that they do not get all the consideration they deserve in a ballet company, but what exactly do they deserve? That is a question that every person thinking of leaving a company should ask him or herself in complete soul-searching honesty.

One of the main troubles is that only a few companies in the world give pensions to artists who have sacrificed the best years of their lives on behalf of ballet. If this obviously important problem could be settled then there is no doubt that few dancers would wish to leave. The time has come for this question to be given very serious consideration.

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Fair Exchange

The stars of the Paris Opéra

by IVOR GUEST

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That the great company of the Paris Opéra and our own Sadler's Wells Ballet at Covent Garden have agreed on an exchange is an event of major importance not only in the history of ballet but also, we hope, in the furtherance of an understanding between two nations. On September 27 and 28 both visiting companies open their respective two-week seasons and we sincerely hope that these seasons will lead to further exchanges not only between France and England but also between the other great countries of the world.

As many of the dancers who will appear at Covent Garden are not well-known to the British public as a whole, here are notes on each of the *Etoiles*, *Premières Danseuses* **and** *Premiers Danseurs.*

Yvette Chauviré and Michel Renault, as the Young Man and his Shadow, in Lifar's Les Mirages *which has a score by Sauguet and designs by Cassandre.*

Photo: Fred Brommet

ETOILES (ballerinas)

Lycette Darsonval

LYCETTE DARSONVAL will already be familiar to many ballet goers from her appearance in *The Sleeping Beauty* on television early in 1952. She has been an *étoile* of the Opéra since 1940, and now is engaged on a different basis to the rest of the company, dancing only a stipulated number of performances a year.

During her long career, most of which has been spent at the Opéra, she has created many roles—the most important being perhaps Isabeau in Lifar's *Joan de Zarissa* (1943)—and has been recognized as one of the great interpreters of *Sylvia*, for which her physique and appearance particularly fit her.

Right, Lycette Darsonval who has been an Etoile at the Opéra for longer than anyone in the present company.

She is one of the few female choreographers to have staged a ballet at the Opéra, where her *Nuit Venitienne* was produced in 1939. Recently she has formed her own company, for which she has arranged her own version of Banfield's *Le Combat*.

Yvette Chauviré

YVETTE CHAUVIRÉ, now appearing as guest artist, will also be no stranger to London, where she has danced on several occasions since the War. For her, Lifar, essentially a choreographer who needs to gather inspiration from the dancers with whom he is working, has produced some of his finest ballets: *Istar* (first given on the last day of 1941, earning Chauviré her nomination as *étoile*), *Les Mirages*, and *Nautéos*.

She is, however, more than a great Lifarian interpreter. Her sensitive rendering of *Giselle* has already been appreciated in England, and she no less successfully captures the Romantic spirit of *Le Spectre de la Rose*, for the latest version of which at the Opéra her husband, Constantine Nepo, has designed the costumes and accessories.

Christiane Vaussard

CHRISTIANE VAUSSARD'S first experience of an important role occurred when, without warning, Aveline pushed her forward to replace an *étoile* who had injured herself during a performance of *Le Lac des Cygnes*. Not long afterwards, in 1947, she was nominated *étoile*. That same year she created the leading role in Balanchine's *Sérénade*, when it was produced at the Opéra.

In 1951 Massine selected her for two ballets which he staged at the Opéra-Comique: a revival of *Les Femmes de Bonne Humeur* and *Le Bal du Pont du Nord*.

Last year her romantic quality was effectively displayed in Lifar's all-star divertissement, *Variations*, and more recently she has given a delicate rendering of the role of the Princess in Lifar's *L'Oiseau de Feu*. Her principal teachers have been Albert Aveline and Carlotta Zambelli.

Micheline Bardin

AFTER being rated first of her class in nine successive examinations, MICHELINE BARDIN joined the *étoiles* in January 1948. Her classical parts include Swanilda in *Coppélia*, Djali in *Les Deux Pigeons* (a role which enables her to display her unusual *élévation*), and, partnered usually by Renault, the Blue Bird *pas de deux*.

She created the Ballerina in *Petrouchka* and Zobeide in *Schéhérezade*, when these two Fokine ballets were recently revived by Lifar and Zvereff; and since the engagement of Harald Lander as *maitre de ballet*, she has appeared in most of the works he has staged at the Opéra: *Etudes*, *Printemps Viennois*, and the divertissements in *Les Indes Galantes* (the fabulous *Fête des Fleurs*) and *Obéron*.

Nina Vyroubova

TO many NINA VYROUBOVA will be remembered as the ethereal Sylphide in Gsovsky's recreated version of the famous Taglioni ballet for the Ballets des Champs-Elysées. Engaged as *étoile* at the Paris Opéra in 1949 to fill the vacancy left by Chauviré, she came within the orbit of Lifar and, as a result, her talents have developed in other

Christiane Vaussard in Lifar's Variations *(Schubert music) which was created to show the Etoiles of the company.*

Photo: Studio Liseg

Micheline Bardin in Harald Lander's Etudes. *This work based on the piano studies of Czerny (arranged and orchestrated by Riisager) was first created by Lander for the Royal Danish Ballet in Copenhagen. After Lander left Denmark he went to the Paris Opéra where his new version of this ballet brought him great success.*
Photo: Lipnitzki

*Youly Algaroff as Hippolyte, Madeleine Lafon as Oenone, Nina Vyroubova as Phèdre and Max Bozzoni as Thésée in Lifar's ballet version of Euripides' great tragedy—*Phèdre. *The music is by Georges Auric and the designs by Jean Cocteau.*
This highly dramatic ballet was created some years ago when the title role was taken by Tamara Toumanova. It was one of her best created roles and made a profound impression. Photo: Fred Brommet

directions.

Her versatility and perception of character have enabled her to build up a repertory of roles each completely distinct from the others: Giselle, the Shadow in *Les Mirages*, the evil Queen in *Blanche-Neige*, Arzigogola in *Fourberies*, Phèdre, the Fire Bird.

She is the only *première danseuse étoile* of the Opéra who has not been reared from childhood in "la maison": Trefilova, Preobrazhenska, Gsovsky, Egorova, Zvereff, Brieux have all contributed towards the formation of her style.

Liane Daydé

FRENCH, English and Moorish blood run through the veins of LIANE DAYDÉ, the Opéra's youngest and smallest *étoile*. Her rise has been rapid: she entered the Ecole de Danse in 1942 at the age of nine and was nominated *étoile* in December, 1950, only four years after she had entered the lowest grade of the *corps de ballet*.

Her most important creations have been Snow White in Lifar's *Blanche-Neige*, Aricie in the Lifar-Cocteau-Auric ballet *Phèdre*, and Tripetta in Lander's *Hop-Frog*.

After the departure of Chauviré from the regular company in 1949, she took over the role of the Princess in *Le Chavelier et la Damoiselle*, and she is at present sharing the title-role in *Giselle* with Darsonval, Chauviré and Vyroubova.

Madeleine Lafon

NOMINATED *étoile* in 1952, MADELEINE LAFON possesses a strong technique, which has been formed principally by Ricaux, Volinine and Egorova. As yet she has had few opportunities of creating important roles. Her performances as Fiorina in *Fourberies* and the Mother-in-Law in *Guignol et Pandore*, however, have revealed a flair for light comedy, while her rendering of the peasant-girl Eurystée in *Nautéos*, a ballet in Lifar's neo-classical manner, contrasts sharply, by the simple charm and warmth which she imparts to it, with Chauviré's aloof characterisation of the nereid.

Lafon dances in *Suite en Blanc, Divertissement, Palais de Cristal* (she created the ballerina part in the last movement), and *Variations*, and has also on occasion played the title-role in *Blanche-Neige*.

Liane Daydé who reached the position of Etoile so spectacularly a few years ago.
Photo: Fred Brommet

Premières Danseuses

FOLLOWING the *étoiles* in the hierarchy are the *premières danseuses*, of whom three are pictured here: PAULETTE DYNALIX, who had the distinction of being the youngest Giselle ever to have been seen on the stage of the Opéra, JOSETTE CLAVIER, who has been seen on television here as the Danseuse de Degas in *Entre Deux Rondes*, and CLAUDE BESSY, who shares the role of the Queen of the Wilis in *Giselle* with Dynalix. GENEVIEVE GUILLOT has an equivalent grading as *première danseuse de caractère*.

ETOILES (male)

Serge Lifar

EXCEPT for a short period after the war, SERGE LIFAR has been one of the *maitres de ballet* at the Paris Opéra since 1929, and it has been largely through his efforts that the regeneration of its ballet has taken place.

The current repertory contains a large proportion of his ballets, a number of which will be seen in London for the first time during the coming season. He still makes occasional appearances as a dancer, although he is now concentrating more and more on character roles such as Scapin in *Fourberies* and Köstchei in *L'Oiseau de Feu*.

Several books stand to his name, including biographies of Auguste Vestris, Carlotta Grisi and Diaghilev, a study of *Giselle*, a history of Russian ballet, a manual of classical technique, and a treatise on choreography; he is at present working on his memoirs, parts of which have already been published serially in *Paris-Comoedia*.

Michel Renault

MICHEL RENAULT, a Parisian, entered the Opéra in 1941, and three years later, at the age of seventeen, was nominated *étoile* from the ranks of the *grands sujets*.

Taught by Gustave Ricaux and Serge Peretti, he has acquired a brilliance of execution

Three Premières Danseuses. Paulette Dynalix, Claude Bessy and Josette Clavier. Right. Serge Lifar as Kostchëi and Youly Algaroff as Prince Ivan in Lifar's version of L'Oiseau de Feu *which was created in homage to Serge Diaghilev. Photos: Fred Brommet*

in which strength and grace are nicely matched: his effortless *ballon* is nowhere better displayed than in the male *variation* of the Blue Bird *pas de deux*.

To his technical qualities he has brought a considerable power of expression, of which he has given proof in such parts as Romeo in Lifar's *Roméo et Juliette* and *Petrouchka*. He has danced in most of the ballets in the repertory.

Max Bozzoni

ÉTOILE since 1948, MAX BOZZONI is seen to best advantage in character parts. His Mascarille in Lifar's *Fourberies*, for which he seems to have taken Harpo Marx as his inspiration, is the best comic rendering to be seen at the Opéra today; he also fills the roles of Hilarion in *Giselle*, the Merchant in *Les Mirages*, the Moor in *Petrouchka*, and Thésée in *Phèdre*.

In addition, in such ballets as *Divertissement*, he shows himself to be an excellent partner, effacing himself admirably while displaying his ballerina.

Youly Algaroff

YOULY ALGAROFF, who has been seen in London with the Ballets de Monte Carlo in 1946 and the Ballets des Champs-Elysées in 1948, was engaged at the Opéra as *étoile* in January, 1953, at the same time as Jean Babilée. His creations with the French national company to date are Max Linder in Lifar's *Cinéma*, his *variation* in *Grand Pas*, the Tsarevitch in Lifar's *L'Oiseau de Feu*, and the principal male role in *Printemps Viennois*.

He has also succeeded Lifar in the role of Hippolyte in *Phèdre*. His discreet nobility of style fit him particularly for roles which require a romantic interpretation.

Jean-Paul Andréani

JEAN-PAUL ANDRÉANI reached the stellar heights in January, 1954. A dancer of astonishing *élévation* and lightness, whose *jetés* and *cabrioles* are breathtaking for the height at which they are performed, Andréani has still to develop the expressive side of the complete dancer's talent, although his unexpectedly restrained performance in *Le Spectre de la Rose* suggests that he appreciates the poetic spirit of that work.

His principal creations have been Borée in the *Fête des Fleurs* from *Les Indes Galantes*, the Male Dancer in *Cinéma*, and the *variation* which he performs in *Grand Pas*.

Premiers Danseurs

PROMINENT also are the *premiers danseurs:* RAOUL BARI, whose lack of height is compensated by an unusually clean finish to his execution; PIERRE LACOTTE, who has taken over Kalioujny's role in *Etudes;* NICHOLAS EFIMOFF, who plays mime parts; and RAYMOND FRANCHETTI, whose finest interpretation — the Dwarf in *Septuor* — London will unfortunately not be seeing during this year's visit.

Jean-Paul Andréani the most recent of the dancers of the Opéra to be elevated to the rank of Etoile. *Photo: Brommet*

Works to be shown in London

OF the ballets which will be shown at Covent Garden during the two-week season, thirteen are by Serge Lifar. They are—

Variations (Schubert music). A work created to show the six Etoiles of the company in variations suitable to their particular qualities.

Grand Pas (Brahms music). Designed to show the male Etoiles.

Suite en Blanc (Lalo music, Landowski designs).

Les Mirages (Sauguet music, Cassandre décor).

Phèdre (Auric music, Cocteau designs).

Guignol et Pandore (Jolivet music, Dignimont designs). Created in 1944.

L'Apres Midi d'un Faune (Debussy music, designs after Bakst). Lifar's version of the ballet which Nijinsky originally created.

Romeo et Juliette (Tchaikovsky music, Moulène designs). This ballet version of Shakespeare's tragedy has been seen many times in England in concert versions.

Entre Deux Rondes (Rousseau music, Landowski designs). The love between a statue and a Degas dancer in a picture gallery.

Icare (Szyfer percussion, Larthe designs). The Icarus story to percussion which created such an impression before the war.

Istar (d'Indy music, Bakst designs). Virtually a solo on a Babylonian theme.

Nautéos (Leleu music, Brayer designs). A dramatic ballet about the sea.

L'Oiseau de Feu (Stravinsky music, Wakhevitch designs). Lifar's version of the ballet first created for Diaghilev by Fokine.

THERE will be three works by Harald Lander, formerly Ballet Master at the Royal Theatre in Copenhagen.

Etudes (Czerny music arranged Riisager, Moulène-Fost designs). Revised version of the ballet created originally in Denmark.

Les Indes Galantes (Rameau music, Fost-Moulène designs). The *Tableau des Fleurs* from the elaborate production of Rameau's opera.

Printemps à Vienne (Schubert music, Maillart designs).

THE only work in the repertoire by George Balanchine is:

Palais de Cristal (Bizet music, Fini designs). The first version of Balanchine's ballet to Bizet's only symphony, since given by New York City Ballet and The Royal Danish Ballet.

Lakes of Swans

Preobrajensky as prince Siegfried in a variation (not given in Western versions) in the Prologue of Swan Lake *in Moscow.*

TO see ballet in the Soviet Union at the precise moment when many of its greater stars were out of the country might well be considered a waste of time. But even with that limitation—if limitation it was—it proved a revelation and provided a standard of comparison by the side of which there is very little else.

From some half-dozen performances of ballet, seen in such widely separated centres as Moscow, Leningrad and Tbilisi (capital of the Georgian Republic in Transcaucasia) it is easy to come to one conclusion: that the standard of dancing from the purely technical point of view is, in the Soviet Union, the highest in the world.

There is simply no comparison to be made with our own British companies or with any others which have visited us since the war.

This is not the case everywhere behind the Iron Curtain. I saw in Prague, on my one night there on the way through to Moscow, a performance of *Swan Lake* which is better forgotten, although it showed as far as production is concerned some interesting variants of dramatic continuity which linked up to some extent with the performance I saw later at the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow.

Both productions vary from ours in the first act in that the comedy character of the drunken Tutor does not exist, and both dispense with the eloquent mime between the Prince and the Princess-Mother which has been retained in Sergueef's production at Covent Garden.

In Prague, too, there is an interesting variant: when the Princess-Mother enters in the first act (Prologue), she bears a birthday gift for the Prince—a cross-bow which is used, later on, to provide point for the projected shooting trip. And both leave out any question of drunken revelry, the Tutor remaining a dignified and restraining figure.

The Prologue in Moscow is a magnificent piece of staging, as well it can be on a stage that has a proscenium opening of seventy-five feet compared with Covent Garden's forty-two feet.

Again the Tutor is a dignified and somewhat insignificant figure. Leader of the revels is the Prince's Jester, who almost dominates this act and nearly does the same in the Ballroom Scene later on. He was danced in the production I saw by Khomiakov, a brilliant technician, short and rather stockily built, whose leaps, pirouettes and turns roused the Bolshoi audience almost to fever pitch, and whose general standard of mime and acting was equally impressive.

It is difficult to reconcile conflicting versions and I was unable to do any serious research as to whether or not this character genuinely belonged to the authentic ballet. But if he does, it is difficult to understand why Sergueef left him out of the Covent Garden production. The only reason that occurs to me is that at the time there was no dancer available to take the role; but today it would seem a "natural" for Alexander Grant.

The problem of the flying Swans at the end of the Prologue is solved in both Moscow and Prague by projection. As the sky darkens the white figures of the Swans flicker across the back-cloth, and in Prague a small serving boy appears at the back, bearing a cushion with a pile of cross-bows. The Prince and his companions seize them and the curtain falls as they hurry off to the chase.

Elevated Magician

There are important production changes in both Moscow and Prague productions of the Second Act (our naming).

Here the principal difference is that the role we call Rothbart the Magician is elevated to an important dancing plane. Incidentally, in Prague he is called Rudovous and in Moscow has no name at all, merely being called The Evil Genius. But in both productions the role is taken by a dancer who has glittering choreography of leaps and *jetés* and a place in the story which makes him a principal dancing character.

In Prague he wears a tight costume of purple, green and red and a short red beard. He comes down from his "perch" backstage, dances his interference between the Prince and the Swan Princess, and there is a choreographic duel between the two men.

Prague's finale to the act is also completely different from ours. Rothbart, having parted the lovers, comes slowly right down to the footlights at the left-hand (audience view) corner.

There he performs incantations, and suddenly, from a trap, there emerges his daughter Odile. To the concluding bars of music they perform a mime of his instructions to her, thus lending dramatic point to what is to follow in the Ballroom Scene. This, of course, makes it necessary that there shall be different dancers for Odette and Odile.

In Moscow the second act is one of the most moving experiences I have ever had from ballet.

The performance I saw was conducted by the 22-years-old Genady Rozhdestvensky, whose rigid control, fluid beat and eloquent understanding of the score produced an orchestral performance which was dancing in itself.

The perfection of Plisetskaya

Added to this was Maya Plisetskaya as the Swan Princess with Preobrajensky as the Prince. The production was on a scale of magnificence impossible to describe, and the dancing was pure poetry.

Again the role of Rothbart (the Evil Genius according to Russian naming) is a full dancing role. Again he takes part in the encounter between the Prince and the Swan Princess. He watches their meeting from a point backstage, in this production in complete costume as an Owl, feathered and crested, with enormous wings fixed to his arms, which he raises and lowers menacingly, and which he uses with great effect in the *grandes jetés* with which his choreography abounds. With a flying leap he reaches the middle of the stage, parts the lovers, drives the Prince from the stage, and threatens the cowering Princess.

Then, from the right-hand corner, the troupe of Swans enters, and with more

The Black Swan pas de deux *from the Ballroom scene in* Swan Lake.

Plisetskaya as Odile and Preobrajensky as Prince Siegfried.

Comparisons between the productions of *Swan Lake* now generally practiced in Western Europe and those in Russia (at the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow) and in Prague

by EVAN SENIOR

leaps and turns the Evil Genius drives them in turn from the stage, again reaching his perch on the rocks with a terrific *jeté* to stand there in triumph before disappearing.

Only then comes the familiar music of the entrance of the Swans on *pointe* in single file, as we know it.

There follows the long passage of *corps-de-ballet,* variations and *pas-de-deux* and solos. The Waltz has three leading soloists instead of our two, and the stage clears completely just before the harp cadenza which ushers in the Prince. The Princess approaches him, and the famous *pas-de-deux* is for the two only, with no "Prince's Friend" as additional support, as we have seen it done in films of the Soviet ballet.

There are slight differences in the choreography of the following Little Swans variation, done by six dancers, and there are three leading Swans in the full *corps-de-ballet* instead of our two.

The Swan Princess's solo is taken very slowly. I do not know whether this is generally done, or whether it was simply to show off the magnificent balance of which Plisetskaya is capable.

As the act drew to its close, the choreography much the same as ours, Rothbart again appeared on the rocks backstage, his enormous wings raised. As Prince and Princess embraced, he leaped down and parted them, his magic power forcing the Prince back, and quite obviously, according to the mime, changing the Princess back to a Swan. At the beginning of the act a group of model swans had proceeded slowly across the back of the stage. Now the same group, reversed, returned across the edge of the lake, and to the appropriate music, were once more seen in projected flight.

The importance of a Jester

The Jester is again the centre of the opening of the Ballroom Scene. He performs the functions of master of ceremonies, tries to entertain the dejected Prince, ushers in the various groups of national dancers: the Spanish, Neapolitan, Hungarian and Polish groups; and intersperses them with fast and acrobatic solos of his own. The whole section is taken at terrific speed, ending with a Mazurka in which the whole court takes part.

The entrance of Rothbart and Odile is exactly as we have it, but immediately the difference becomes noticable. Rothbart and Odile have a *pas-de-deux* of immense bravura, to music which I have not heard before, and which abounds in high leaps, rounds of *chaînées* and, for Rothbart, numbers of *pirouettes-à-quatre,* the music and dancing rising to an exciting speed at the conclusion.

Then comes the famous "Black Swan" *pas-de-deux,* in which Plisetskaya and Preobrajensky showed themselves as artists whose like it is difficult to imagine.

Plisetskaya is not only a dancer of technical brilliance: she is also an artist who uses her technique in such a way that only a few seconds later does one realise exactly what incredible *arabesque,* what length of time on *pointe,* what liquid extension of arm or achievement of line she has brought into play. Preobrajensky is obviously no longer a youth, but he has a grace and style and strength of a type we do not know, absolutely masculine, equally absolutely graceful, and with an elevation in solo work and a power in support that give one an entirely different outlook on the place of the male dancer in ballet from what one has from watching Western dancers.

The end of the act is not the scene of confusion it usually turns out to be with us. As Rothbart intervenes in the dancing, himself taking as brilliant a part as the two soloists, there is the sudden change in the music, and through the great Gothic arch at the back, framing a view of the lake, the projected tiny figure of Odette is seen, in *arabesque.* At the sight of it the Prince halts, Rothbart and Odile retreat and disappear, and the court watches in astonishment as the Prince runs out and the curtain falls.

In the final act there is a great deal of music quite new to me, and again I had no opportunity (as I had in Leningrad with *The Sleeping Beauty,* and of which I shall write later) to make comparisons with scores.

A long cadenza ushers in the Swans, and a series of Variations by soloists is done to other music, indubitably Tchaikovsky, which I have not heard previously. There is also music unknown to me for the entrance of the Princess.

Then Rothbart, again as an Owl, appears in the ruined archway at the edge of the lake. He descends in a leap and disperses the group of Swans, as the Prince enters to a solo on tuba and trombones and he and the Princess take their *pas-de-deux* to an entrancingly beautiful 'cello solo.

At the end of this, the choreography much as we know it, the music rises to a storm. Here all the technical resources of the great theatre come into play. As the sky darkens, a storm rises on the lake, with waves dashing against the rocks, clouds flying, lightning flickering, and thunder rolling through the orchestral tumult.

Rothbart flings himself between the lovers, and as Odette slowly moves away, a battle in dance takes place between the magician and the Prince. Circling, leaping, grappling, the fight rages to a furious climax as, in a burst of power, the Prince suddenly tears a wing away.

Maya Plisetskaya as Odette

The maimed Owl falls to the ground, writhing in his death-throes, his one remaining wing beating the ground in a frightening agony. He makes an effort to rise, the Prince seizes him and holds him aloft for a second, then hurls him over the rocks into the boiling tumult of the waves.

Immediately music and storm die down, and Prince and Princess slowly approach each other as the liberated Swans enter on full *pointe* and the ballet ends with all "living happily ever after."

This same storm scene and battle are part of the Prague production, but unfortunately the end is not the same as in Moscow. The Czechs see Odette suddenly wilt on the bank, collapsing in the arms of a dying Prince as both expire slowly under a horrible pink light and lie on the bank in each others' arms. And as the stage is filled with a sickly pink glow the *corps-de-ballet* enter from both sides in a slow *pas-de-bourrée,* arms raised in greeting, as the curtain falls.

The final act of Swan Lake *at the Bolshoi in Moscow, showing the huge stage and* corps de ballet.

Yet Another

by CLIVE BARNES

The Royal Opera House in Stockholm whose company forms the subject of this article. Photo: Merkel Rydberg

BALLET in Sweden is so little known in this country that it may be as well to start this brief survey with a bald statement. The ballet at the Royal Opera, Stockholm, bears in its present phase of development, a closer resemblance to the Sadler's Wells company than it does to the Royal Danish Ballet. It is a company building rather than husbanding a tradition.

Certainly ballet is long established in Sweden, but Stockholm has never maintained its traditions in the manner that has made Copenhagen's ballet company world famous. As a result the problems facing the Swedish ballet to day have a certain similarity (it would be most unwise to carry the parallel too far) with those confronting the pre-War Vic-Wells Ballet.

The first official move to establish ballet in Sweden was made by Gustav III in 1773, and from that time onward Stockholm's ballet history has been, to put it kindly, chequered.

The first *maitre de ballet* was Louis Gallodier, a choreographer who had trained at the Paris Opéra. His successor was Antoine Bournonville (the father of Copenhagen's Auguste), and a pupil of Noverre. In 1791 Noverre himself tentatively approached Gustav for employment.

Gustav III was, whatever his political shortcomings, an enlightened man and the most potent force that has ever been known in the Swedish theatre. A liaison between the theatre King and the great choreographer could have had a profound influence on ballet, but the opportunity was missed, Noverre never worked in Stockholm, and ballet is the poorer as the result.

"The opportunity was missed"—this sad phrase acts as a punctuation mark to any history of Swedish ballet. So many opportunities have been missed!

Fillipo Taglioni worked at the Royal Theatre for a time, Marie his illustrious daughter, who was half-Swedish by the way, being born in Stockholm just one hundred and fifty years ago. But the Taglionis migrated, as had earlier the Bournonvilles, and the story of nineteenth century Swedish ballet will set no historians eyes aglow.

Competence followed competence, until it degenerated into mediocrity. Then in 1913 circumstances gave Swedish ballet another chance to make good. In the full maturity of his powers Michel Fokine, the greatest choreographic genius of his time, came to work at the Royal Theatre, and, to quote Gustav Hillestrom, "in a very short time raised the standard to an unbelievably high level".

But Fokine left and it would now appear that not one of the many ballets he revived (he only created one new work, *Moonlight Sonata*) is left in the repertory.

However Fokine had made the public aware of the possibilities of ballet as an art form, and in 1920 Rolf de Maré, in association with a Fokine pupil Jean Borlin, formed the celebrated Ballets Suédois. During the four years of its existence, which was terminated by Borlin's death in 1924, this *avant-garde* company was, like the Diaghilev Ballet Russe, a perfect reflection of the taste of its age.

Les Ballets Suédois, although predominantly Scandinavian in dancing personnel, was an international company and while it probably exerted some influence on trends in Paris and London, in Stockholm it left hardly a ripple behind it.

Ballet at the Royal Opera between the wars does not appear to have been very distinguished, but soon after the last war there arose a situation strangely reminiscent of that when Fokine was invited to work at the Opera House. Antony Tudor came to Stockholm and so gave the company yet another golden opportunity to find a place in the sun. Tudor mounted *Jardin aux Lilas* and *Gala Performance* on the company, and produced *Giselle*. But he did not create a new work for the company, and now even his two revivals are out of the repertory. Nevertheless he appears to have enlivened the company and improved its standards of teaching.

Looking at the Swedish Ballet today one can see the signs of a renaissance, or if renaissance is too big a word for development at such an embryonic state, one can at least say that Sweden is about to be given yet another chance to establish herself in the world of ballet. This chance is offered by two women, Mary Skeaping and Birgit Cullberg.

We have said before that a state ballet company should be one half museum, one half laboratory; it must conserve the good of the old and develop the good of the new. From these processes can arise a national school of dancing and one has to travel no further to discover a national ballet.

Enter Mary Skeaping

Mary Skeaping, who recently was appointed Director of ballet at the Royal Theatre for an initial period of three years, is a person well-fitted by experience and temperament to inculcate tradition into the traditionless Swedish ballet.

She studied ballet (both Russian and Cecchetti methods) under many famous teachers in London and Paris, and the modern dance under Laban. She danced with various companies before the war, including the Pavlova Ballet, and is a teacher of considerable experience. For some years she was Ballet Mistress of the Sadler's Wells Ballet at Covent Garden.

After leaving Sadler's Wells at the end of 1951, she went in 1952 to America and Canada, where she worked with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet. At the beginning of 1953 she went to Stockholm for the first time and mounted the full-length *Swan Lake* in the phenomenal time of eight weeks. Later on in the year she mounted *Giselle* in Stockholm, *Swan Lake* in Helsinki, returned briefly to London before going off to Cuba to produce *Swan Lake* for the Ballet Alicia Alonso.

Skeaping is an extremely gifted and imaginative producer. She has a strict regard for tradition, for example her version of *Swan Lake* is basically identical to the one Nicolai Sergueff salvaged from his notebooks on the original Maryinsky production, but she is not a slave to precedent. She has the courage to make conservative innovations, coupled with the taste to make those innovations more in keeping with the spirit of the original than those barely decipherable carbon copies of classics that inspire more reverence than enjoyment. But for the most part she restores rather than adds.

From her hands Sweden will receive the same "classic" repertory as played such a key part in the establishment of ballet in our own country. As the next step, *The Sleeping Beauty* is to go into rehearsal this autumn.

Scandinavia's modern choreographer

Birgit Cullberg studied with classical teachers in Stockholm, and subsequently for four years with Jooss at Dartington Hall. She started her career by giving dance recitals and mounting small-scale works on private companies. In 1945 she formed with another talented Swedish choreographer, Ivo Cramer, Svenska Dans-Teatern (The Swedish Dance Theatre), and for this company such ballets were created as *The Three Musketeers* (recently revived by Cullberg at the Opera House) and Cramer's most impressive *Biblical Pictures* (called *The Message* when produced in England).

In 1949 Cullberg produced her famous dance drama based on Strindberg, *Miss Julie*. The great success of this production led to it being mounted at the Royal Opera House, and in 1950 she gathered a company together and gave that ballet and two others during a short season in London. This season, ill-advised and disastrous from almost every standpoint, did considerable harm to Cullberg's reputation in England and should be mercifully forgotten.

She was soon engaged by the Royal Opera and since 1950 has produced a number of ballets at the Opera House, the most recent being a new version of her earlier *Medea*. She is now engaged as choreographer and ballet-mistress to her own works in the repertory.

Cullberg is with little doubt the most talented choreographer working in Scandinavia. She has great potentiality and given the opportunity could possibly develop into a major choreographer. Sweden is fortunate to have her services at such a juncture. She has the ability to make the ballet a living force.

Behind the figures of Skeaping and Cullberg lies the company, a large straggling company, at once promising and hopeless; an uneven lot that uniquely combines the virtues of the Ballet Rambert with the vices of the Paris Opéra. Aspiration is mixed with lassitude—at one end of the scale youth is waiting for its chance, at the other competence is waiting for its pension.

The principal dancers (in no particular order) are Ellen Rasch, Gunnel Lindgren, Elsa Marianne von Rosen, Mariane Orlando, Bjorn Holmgren and Teddy Rhodin. Among the younger dancers, many of whom show un-

Chance for Sweden

doubted talent, Gerd Andersson (who like Orlando studied for a brief time at the Sadler's Wells School) and Willy Sandberg may be specially noted.

Although comparatively few of these dancers could rank as top-flight by international standards they, and doubtless many of their colleagues less prominent in the few performances I witnessed, provide a sound basis for the future.

All the materials are to hand to build up a ballet company of world-wide importance in Stockholm. The ballet school is operating well, the dancers lack only experience and polish, the money is there (Sweden finances her state theatres by public lotteries), and Skeaping and Cullberg are capable of forming a strong repertory.

Against all this must be set the Swedish attitude to ballet, which is, I fancy, just a little casual. A further danger to the company is the rift (I speak as an outsider) that appears to exist among the audience and critics, splitting them into two camps — those in favour of the classics and those in favour of the modern Cullberg works. If these two camps will realise that the two are essentially complementary to one another, they will be doing much to aid the renaissance of ballet in Sweden.

Right. Mary Skeaping teaching Ellen Rasch and Bjorn Holmgren the roles of Giselle and Albrecht in Giselle.

Left. The younger students of the Royal Theatre school in a pas de deux *class.*

Right. Elsa-Marianne von Rosen as Miss Julie in Cullberg's ballet based on Strindberg's play of the same name.

Bottom left. Teddy Rhodin as Prince Seifried and Mariane Orlando as Odette in Mary Skeaping's version of the Petipa-Ivanov-Tchaikovsky Swan Lake.

Bottom right. Orlando as Odette in the final act of Swan Lake. *Clive Barnes wrote about it in detail in our August issue.*

All photographs by Merkel Rydberg

VARIATIONS ON A THEME

First given by the Ballet Rambert at the Sadler's Wells Theatre on June 21, 1954. Choreography, JOHN CRANKO. Décor and Costumes, KENNETH ROWELL. Music, BENJAMIN BRITTEN (*Variations on a Theme of Frank Bridge*) arranged by James Bernard.

Theme	ALEXANDER BENNETT
Adagio	ALEXANDER BENNETT, NOREEN SOPWITH
March (Charlatan)	ANNE LASCELLES, with NORMAN DIXON, TERRY GILBERT, JOHN CHESWORTH, NORMAN MORRICE
Romance	ALEXANDER BENNETT, NOREEN SOPWITH
Aria (Girl with the Flame)	AUDREY NICHOLLS
Bouree (Girl with Scissors)	MARY MUNRO
Valse (Girl and Shadow)	BERYL GOLDWYN, ANN HORN
Perpetual Movement	ENSEMBLE
Lament	GILLIAN MARTLEW, MARCIA WALDEN, ALISON NORWOOD, VALERIE MARSH, RONALD YERRELL
Fugue	ENSEMBLE

Adagio. Alexander Bennett as the Young Man and Noreen Sopwith as the Child. One of the opening moments of the ballet when the Young Man tries to detach himself from the Child.

CHOREOGRAPHY

SHOULD you be one of those who expects to find a meaning in everything, from strawberry jam to a Bach *chaconne*, you may well find Cranko's *Variations on a Theme* something of a puzzle. But in recent years a number of the better ballets created have not been particularly easy to comprehend objectively as narratives.

Although obscurantism—obscurity deliberately smoke-screening vacuity—is to be detested, ballet is one of the least literal of the arts and frequently reaches up to poetic uncertainty, to a statement capable of personal interpretation.

Not that *Variations on a Theme* is especially esoteric in its meaning, although some of its critics have made it sound like a compound of a Mau-Mau ritual and a Bloomsbury seance. In fact its theme of a young man seeking to detach himself from common humanity until the bitter experience of life and the wormy circumstance of death send him back to a wary acceptance of childhood's simplicity, appears, judging from applause and bar-comment, to be a lot clearer to audiences than to the critics who are attempting to guide them.

This new ballet has something common in conception with the same choreographer's *Harlequin in April*, and here, as in the earlier ballet, there are many cross- and counter-themes. Some of these are possibly more in the mind of the beholder than in the hand of the choreographer; the ballet throws out ideas which each onlooker will legitimately interpret differently. Thus to me the sexual symbolism, obvious in the work, concerned family life and the problem associated with monogamy and promiscuity, yet whether Cranko envisaged such an interpretation of his work is not of paramount importance.

Because Cranko's aims in ballet often seem so laudable, one is perhaps in danger of over-praising his achievements. Fokine sought to make ballet more emotionally expressive; Cranko, Robbins and others are seeking to make ballet more intellectually expressive. In intellectualising their art-form—like it or lump it—these choreographers are merely putting into practice a tendency that has already overtaken nearly every other contemporary art.

They are, though many die-hards could never believe it, making ballet an expression of our times. Unfortunately as at present we refuse to accept dancing as a serious means of artistic expression, we are shocked to find ballet making the same demands on our faculties as do other arts.

Cranko lacks the choreographic clarity of Robbins. Robbins is fertile with dance; his dance figures and images are economical, inventive and fluent. Cranko is not instinctively a master-choreographer, but he has ideas. A flood of ideas, none the worse for being more theatrical than original.

At times in this present work it must be admitted that the choreography seems incidental to the theme, and occasionally the choreographer's symbols are too cheaply bought and too obviously displayed. As in an earlier work, *The Shadow*, Cranko appears a little unhappy in working with an existing score, which gives an episodic quality to the ballet, where a more continuous narrative line would possibly have been more to his point.

Despite these qualifications Cranko has produced his completest and most convincing work to date. The choreography is well-cut to the needs of the production. An interesting aspect of this is the manner in which Cranko, I hope intentionally, deepens the work's meaning by hinting at passages from his own *Harlequin in April* and Robbins' *Age of Anxiety*, and so calls up memories of the two ballets that have most in common with *Variations on a Theme*.

Cranko has not produced a masterpiece, and that is unfortunate, but he is groping towards a new approach to ballet. It has been suggested by a certain gentleman (one that found poor Dali's *Mad Tristan* stimulating, incidentally) that these gropings should be curbed, and that choreographers should only make ballets that are intelligible to a child of five. For little Peter Pans this state of affairs would probably prove admirable, but for the sake of the adult section of the ballet audience Cranko ought to be encouraged in his experiments.

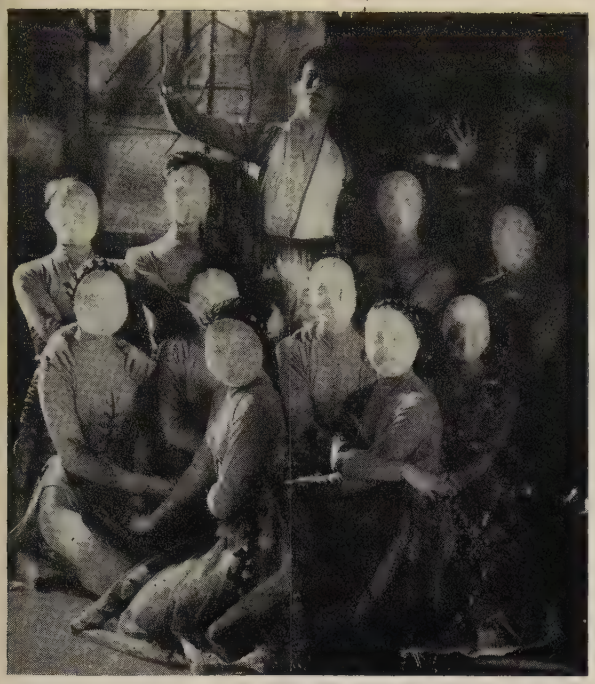
DANCING

IT was appropriate that on the occasion of the entry of Cranko into the almost all-embracing fold of Rambert choreographers, and the production of one of the most important works to be mounted by Ballet Rambert since before the war, the company should give an outstanding performance.

This young group has already shown its mettle in the last two years by its performances in the fine ballets of the old repertory; now it gets its reward in having a ballet of its own worthy to pass down to the next generation of Rambert dancers.

Much of the responsibility for the success of the ballet fell upon Alexander Bennett in the principal role. Since he has been leading the company Bennett has developed into a stage personality who at times reminds me of that

Lament. Ronald Yerrell as the dead boy with Gillian Martlew, Marcia Walden, Alison Norwood and Valerie Marsh as the mourners.



Left. Fugue. The Young Man surrounded by a chorus of anonymous and sexless shapes.

Right. Bouree. Mary Munro, as the Girl with the Scissors, supported by Norman Dixon and Terry Gilbert. Anne Lascelles as The Charlatan is seen on the right.

All photographs by Denis de Marney

fine Jooss dancer Hans Zullig. He has the same sincerity and directness, the same power (although not yet so developed) of giving meaning to movement. His dancing and miming was at all times an asset to the choreographer in providing an essential focus to the ballet.

Although none of the other roles held the same key position, they were all without exception extremely well given. The potentialities to be found in this present Rambert company appear to be remarkable.

Clive Barnes.

MUSIC

BENJAMIN BRITTEN'S *Variations on a Theme of Frank Bridge* was commissioned by Boyd Neel and first performed by his orchestra at the Salzburg Festival of 1937. The 24-year-old composer was practically unknown at the time and the *Variations* won for him immediate recognition and predictions of a brilliant future.

Some idea of the music's variety and suitability for dancing can be had from the titles of the variations given in the score: *Introduction and Theme; Adagio; March; Romance; Aria Italiana; Bourrée Classique; Wiener Walzer; Moto Perpetuo; Funeral March; Chant; Fugue and Finale.* Highly inventive and strikingly imaginative, the writing shows an amazing mastery and the ability to draw so rich a range of colour from a string band that the ear is sometimes deceived into hearing woodwind and brass where none exist.

Why it was thought necessary (except perhaps on economic grounds) to have the work re-scored for full orchestra when previously used for a ballet in Ashton's *Le Rêve de Léonor* and for the present production, I cannot imagine. Unsuccessful though the earlier ballet was as a whole, it nevertheless showed quite clearly the music's ability to create and sustain powerful theatrical atmosphere. **David Hunt.**

DECOR

THERE are many schools of thought as to what constitutes a good ballet décor. Some would have it that the scenery remain nothing more than an unobtrusive background, others might declare that an excess of colour heightens the effect and that the richness can never be overdone. Impossible is it to lay down any rules as to the true position of décor in the general scheme of ballet because the ruling factor is the subject matter.

The good design is one that realises and enhances the idea of the ballet, the music and the choreography. It should not, according to the general rule, overpower any of these elements.

It might be thought, at first glance, that Kenneth Rowell has overstepped the mark in his designing of Cranko's *Variations on a Theme.* His scenery seems, at times, to completely swamp the dancers. On the other hand, the ballet's theme—man seeking to detach himself from common humanity—suggests that the décor should play its part in being part of the thing which man seeks to detach himself from.

Looked at in this light, Rowell's spiky vistas and grottos are just what the work needs. The setting suggests a tangle of uncertainty—nothing leads anywhere in particular but everywhere in general. Strange blasted shapes seem the visual realisation of the twisted and tortuous recesses of an undetermined mind.

The vertical lines and the bright colour appear to suggest the influence of the French designer, Carzou. But it soon becomes apparent that it all has the stamp of Rowell's own very personal style. It is, at all times, compelling, beautiful and exciting.

The costumes for these creatures in the Young Man's wilderness are equally effective and fantastic. If fault could be found it would be in three dancers covered with grey mosquito-netting. Though they do form into an interesting graven group, the general effect tends to hilarity more than anything else. For Mary Munro's Bouree for a Girl with Scissors, the gargantuan realistic scissors are at variance with the general approach to the ballet (these have been altered since the opening and are now stylised).

Since he came to England from Australia, Rowell has created consistently interesting ballet designs—mainly for Walter Gore. In this new work he has given us his best work to date and if only we could find some more designers with equal imagination and sense of colour, we would have little to be ashamed of as regards ballet designing. Unfortunately such designers are as rare as pearls in the oysters on our plates. Rowell's collaboration with Cranko makes an admirable combination of two people who are striving to get ballet out of the rut into which it seems so desperately to be embedding itself.

Peter Williams.

The finale of the ballet. The Young Man discovers his need of the Child. Over a sea of arms and bodies she re-approaches him and together they set off again.

This picture gives some idea of Kenneth Rowell's fine décor though nothing other than colour reproduction could possibly do it full justice.

LA ESMERALDA

Public pre-view performances of this production were given by the company in Lisbon (Act II only), Brussels and at the Royal Festival Hall at a charity performance on July 14, 1954. The work's world premiere was given by London's Festival Ballet, at the Royal Festival Hall on July 15, 1954.

Choreography and production by NICHOLAS BERIOSOFF. Music by CESARE PUGNI, orchestrated by GEOFFREY CORBETT, the divertissements in the last scene orchestrated by AUBREY BOWMAN. Décor and Costumes by NICOLA BENOIS.

CAST

Claude Frollo	ANTON DOLIN
Quasimodo	KEITH BECKETT
Clopin Trouillefou	PETER WHITE
Pierre Gringoire	JOHN GILPIN
Esmeralda	NATALIE KRASSOVSKA
Phoebus de Chateaupers	OLEG BRIANSKY
Fleur-de-Lys	BELINDA WRIGHT
The "Jury" of Three	RUSSELL KERR, LOUIS GODFREY, PETRUS BOSMAN.
Buffoons	ANITA LANDA, NOEL ROSSANA, JEFFREY KOVEL, RONALD EMBLEN.

Corps de ballet of Pickpockets, Cocottes, Guards, Vagabonds, Guests, Buffoons. Spanish, Tyrolean, Tarantella, Clog and Lute Dancers.

Left. Beckett as Quasimodo, Dolin as Frollo and Krassovska as Esmeralda in Act I. Photo: Klemantaski

CHOREOGRAPHY

BALLET is in a peculiar sense a living art, and its way of living is cannibalistic. The present generation of ballets has grown fat on the flesh of its ancestors, and only the dry bones are left of that once proud race, the Romantic ballets. Here and there a lusty ghost, such as *Giselle* or *La Sylphide*, still stalks the happy hunting grounds of its contemporaries, but in the main, only scores, prints, anecdotes and synopses remain to remind us of works by choreographers like Perrot, Saint-Leon, Coralli and the rest.

Festival Ballet, with an eye rightly to the main commercial chance, seeing the desirbility of including a full-evening ballet in its repertory has chosen to exhume one of ballet's innumerable corpses, and has decided to bestow a renaissance upon *Esmeralda*, on the whole a worthy candidate for a re-incarnated second innings.

This old ballet first produced, with Carlotta Grisi in the title role, by Jules Perrot in 1844, had a glorious history before it was eventually banished from our stages. In Russia, where it was first danced by Fanny Elssler in 1849, it has in various forms retained its place until the present day.

This latest production has entirely new choreography by Nicholas Beriosoff, the company's *regisseur*. The story, based on Victor Hugo's novel *Le Notre Dame de Paris*, owes little more to Hugo than its bare plot-structure.

A ballet of this type could in any case approximate no nearer to a great novel than could Donizetti's opera of the same period, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, approach Walter Scott's original romance. It was a time when literature and the stage were at loggerheads, and it would be futile to condemn Beriosoff for not achieving something outside the scope of his task.

This task was, as I see it, to re-create a Romantic ballet, not to produce a modern work based on Hugo. To compose spontaneously in a style alien to his own age is a seemingly impossible feat for any artist, and Beriosoff was probably justified in considerably adapting the manner of his choreography according to modern taste.

The bravura style of much of the dancing while not in accord with what one imagines to have been Romantic choreography, at least does not clash with the cut-and-thrust brilliance of Petipa that all contemporary English audiences are bound to associate with full-evening ballets. Nor could anyone object to Beriosoff's discreet nod to fashion (and to the abilities of his company) in allocating an equal share of the dancing to men, in a way that must have made old Perrot, of the emasculated Romantic ballet, turn green in his grave with envy.

A rather more serious anachronism appears to be Beriosoff's tendency to use modern lifts in his *pas de deux*—a few of these, particularly those for Phoebus with both Fleur and Esmeralda, are out of keeping. Nor am I happy with some of the *ensemble* dances for the Truands. These, to me, recalled nothing so much as the Massine of *Beau Danube* vintage, and were at some stylistic variance with the Pugni score, and the remainder of the choreography.

On the question of style it might have been interesting to have compared Beriosoff's re-creation with Ashton's version of *Sylvia*, but Ashton using a far more modern score (musically rather than chronologically) set out to produce an almost entirely Twentieth Century version of an old classic, an aim which patently was not Mr. Beriosoff's.

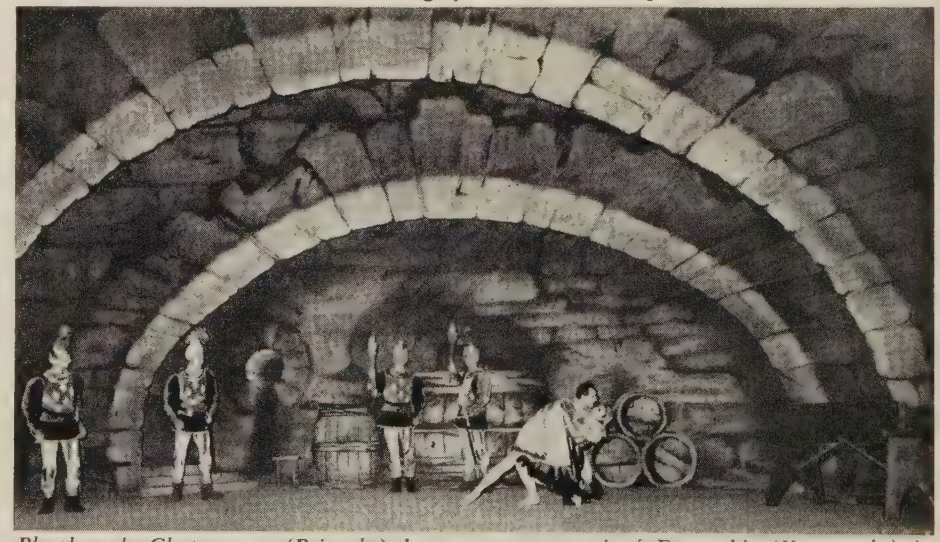
Structurally the ballet shows some signs of being blown up from its original, more concise form. The introduction of two lengthy *divertissements* (themselves more the hallmark of the Petipa period than the Romantic ballet) protracts the drama, which itself is conveyed, as in Bournonville, by mime.

The pantomimic first scene, incidentally an interpolation not in Perrot, is unnecessary; Frollo's attempts at abduction become undramatic in their repetition. Nor is the ballet's ironic ending much more convincing. In conception it sounds like a shrewd piece of theatrecraft, but in practice the action of the principals is so muddled that it comes as a dull mime episode in the middle of a none too enspiriting finale.

In considering Beriosoff's actual choreography one is brought up with a jolt against the fact that although Beriosoff is a masterly *regisseur*, as an original choreographer he is relatively inexperienced.

In these circumstances it need give no surprise that some of the choreography, not the least that for the *ensemble*, is conventional and a little humdrum. The mime is not well arranged, and the intrusion in the last Act of a psuedo-Oriental dance, performed by two girls and a boy who can shimmy like his sister Kate, is as desirable as toothache and just about as relevant.

All in all, while one has certain reservations about the ballet's artistic importance (it is not a sensitive period reconstruction such as



Phoebus de Chateaupers (Briansky) becomes enamoured of Esmeralda (Krassovska) in the Act I of the ballet. Photo: Paul Wilson

Nora Kovach as La Esmeralda. Kovach took over the role shortly after the first performance and it turned out to be eminently suitable both for her striking beauty and her particular style and technique.

Right: Fleur-de-Lys (Belinda Wright) and Phoebus (Briansky) in the pas de deux *in which their engagement is announced much to the dismay of Esmeralda. Photo: Klemantaski*

could have been produced probably only by a large state company, like the Royal Danish Ballet) it is unfair to condemn it as heartily as some criticisms of the work would suggest. It has many merits.

The work was produced before it was well run-in, and during the first week of its production it was trimmed and tightened greatly to its advantage. In its trimmed form *Esmeralda* is entertaining, it provides fine opportunities for dancing, and it gives at least some small idea of what ballet was like during the Nineteenth century.

Given time this ambitious production should settle down in the audience's affections to a period of sustained usefulness to its company.

DANCING

THE reason why the role of Esmeralda was a favourite of Elssler and others is not difficult to understand. Few parts can have offered such an opportunity not only for dancing but for acting. Natalie Krassovska danced almost exquisitely, with a degree of sensitivity and refinement I had not noticed in her work before, but sad to say, her acting made a wooden Indian out of Hugo's romantic heroine.

John Gilpin, as her poet husband Gringoire, also danced with graceful elegance. The lack of masculine punch in his dancing (accentuated by the unfortunate costume and wig he wore in the Oriental Dance) was largely compensated for by his musicality and fluency, but his acting was coldly unemotional and exaggerated.

The ballet's second cast bore eloquent witness to the dictum that the last should be first. The acrobatic distortions practised by the two Hungarian dancers Nora Kovach and Istvan Rabovsky in their previous visit to the Festival Hall did not dispose me favourably towards them, but in *Esmeralda* they showed improvement.

Kovach made a credible creature of the gypsy girl, acting with a disarming absence of restraint and a totally convincing flood-rush of passion. Her dancing, apart from a somewhat grimaced Gypsy Dance in the second Act, was possibly preferable to Krassovska's. Kovach is, what Gautier called her predecessor Elssler, "a pagan dancer", and she is now a force to be reckoned with among the world's younger aspirants to the title of ballerina.

Rabovsky was more peasant than poet as Gringoire. He is not at present such a notable artist as his wife; his dancing still shows a disconcertingly acrobatic tendency. His technique can always surmount with ease the incredible, but he will attempt the impossible. He insists on dancing right up to the last straw that breaks the back of his technical control, and frequently looks untidy and undisciplined for his pains. He must also remember that difficulty of execution is not the only yardstick by which dancing may be judged—some of his jumps, for example, are quite astonishingly ungainly.

Yet when all is said he remains a virtuoso of the type that can breed legends. His elevation, his masculinity, his speed, his quantitatively unsurpassable technique, are all factors which properly used could make a male dancer of the quality we have dreamed of. Nothing but good can come from the association of this dancer, who combines the best with the worst of his craft in unclassifiable juxtaposition, with the reticent good taste and polite virtuosity of British ballet. He and Gilpin, for example, could learn a lot from one another.

Fleur-de-Lys is a pretty name for a colourless creature. She exists to complicate the story and dance a *pas de deux* in the second Act. This second function Belinda Wright fulfilled delightfully, her *pizzicato* solo having a playful archness that was one of the high-spots of the performance.

Phoebus, her Fiancé and Esmeralda's lover, was as active as the libretto suggests. Oleg Briansky brought to the role his usual air of distinction, but was unable to make a great deal of the only badly composed male solo in the ballet. He partnered impeccably. Nicholai Polajenko, a newcomer to the company, the role's second interpreter, seemed hesitant after the confident cavalier manner of Briansky, but appears to be a useful dancer and partners with a pleasing stage presence, greatly improved since his last appearance in London.

On Anton Dolin and Keith Beckett, as Frollo and Quasimodo respectively, fell the main burden of supporting the work's dramatic narrative. Dolin's frozen authority was effective, and Beckett did well in difficult circumstances. The character of Quasimodo is not allowed by the producer, for obvious reasons of dramatic balance, to attain its full misshapen stature. Beckett resisted what must have been a great temptation to over-act.

The company as a whole played its part well, although some of the purely static roles essential to the production were not done as naturally as they might have been. Among the large cast Marilyn Burr, Daphne Dale, Pamela Hart, Anita Landa, Joyce Lyndon, Noel Rossana, Petrus Bosman, Ronald Emblen, Louis Godfrey, Michael Hogan, Russell Kerr, Jeffrey Kovel and Peter White, were all outstanding.

Clive Barnes.

MUSIC

NO other composer wrote more music for the Romantic ballets of the mid-19th century than Cesare Pugni. In fact, with some 300 full-length ballets attributed to him, he is almost certainly the most prolific composer of ballet music who ever lived. Yet so completely has he been forgotten in Western Europe that musical reference books listing thousands of obscure musicians make not even a passing reference to his name.

He was born in Milan in 1805, studied at the Milan Conservatorium, became known as a promising operatic composer and in 1840 moved to St. Petersburg where he attracted attention with several successful ballet scores. Russian ballet was at that time only an off-shoot of the more important Western European centres, and Pugni was quickly snapped up by Perrot and other leading choreographers as a collaborator for countless works first given in London or Paris, many of which eventually found their way to Russia. In 1851 he was appointed official ballet composer at the Maryinsky, and St. Petersburg became his headquarters until his death in 1870. In additon to his enormous output of ballet music (regarded by his contemporaries as among the best ever written), he found time to write 10 operas and 40 masses.

His score for the famous *Pas-de-Quatre* and for the ballerina's variation from the *Don Quichotte pas-de-deux* (identical with another in Pugni's *La Fille de Pharon* and traditionally said to have been interpolated into Minkus's

score at the caprice of the original Kitri) show Pugni as an expert orchestrator, a master of delicate colour, carefully balanced texture and above all, of subtle rhythmic variety ideal for dancing purposes.

It is obvious that for this revival much less than justice has been done to Pugni's reputation by the crude re-orchestration to which his score for *Esmeralda* has been subjected and by the insensitivity and rhythmic squareness of its performance. Equally unfair has been the abuse heaped on it by critics who have surely failed to realise that what they have been hearing is the merest travesty of a 19th-century ballet score, almost completely lacking in all the qualities that the audiences of the day looked for: the airy lightness, the charm, and the delicacy, that were at that time considered first essentials. Like most of the ballet music of the period, *Esmeralda* offers an unceasing flow of delightful melody, and melody based on a vocal line. If these captivating tunes are "banal", "creaking" or "dismal", then so too is all of *Giselle*, Lovenskjold's *La Sylphide*, or if it comes to that, Bellini's *I Puritani*.

Festival Ballet may have had only a piano score at their disposal; or perhaps it was thought necessary to vulgarise the music—over-weighting and submerging the attractive melodies under thick blaring brass—to bring it into line with the garishness of the production as a whole. In either case, what has been done is tasteless and unforgiveable. That Pugni does not attempt *pastiche* of the music of the period of the ballet's story (polonaises and mazurkas in mediaeval Paris, indeed!) is beside the point: such considerations never entered anyone's head in those days. **David Hunt.**

Krassovska (Esmeralda) and John Gilpin (Gringoire) in the new happy ending to the last act. This change was made shortly after the ballet's world première. Esmeralda is reprieved owing to the intervention of Phoebus and she is restored to the poet, Gringoire.

This would seem to be nearer the original ending of the Perrot version. It was later in Russia that the tragic ending was substituted.

The original story was given in full in our July issue.

Photo: Paul Wilson.

DECOR

NICOLA BENOIS is the resident designer at La Scala Opera House in Milan and for that august theatre he has embellished many an opera and ballet. As the son of Alexander Benois, he has the right background for romantic ballet.

It is as well to take this into consideration before passing judgment on his work for Festival Ballet on the shallow stage of the Royal Festival Hall.

Benois has obviously conceived his designs in the light of the theatre as he knows it and not in the light of a converted concert platform.

The result is that his massive sets, which looked quite suitable in the designs we reproduced in our July issue, completely lose their perspective on the Festival Hall stage. Worse still, the costumes with their plethora of pattern and colour are so much on top of the audience that they utterly obscure the pattern of the choreography. The result is a kaleidoscopic jumble which leaves the spectator in a daze and with a severe headache.

It may, of course, be unfortunate that these designs had first to be seen under such circumstances but it does not seem as though the circumstances under which *La Esmeralda* will inevitably be given with Festival Ballet have been taken fully into consideration.

Benois has seen the company in Italy so he must have known the sort of stages upon which his work would appear; surely simplicity should have been the key-note. Alas! elaboration has been the order of the day and both the ballet and Mr. Benois' reputation have suffered as a result.

The opening setting, in the Bell Tower of Notre-Dame, would be an effective enough beginning on a stage with great depth, on anything smaller is less distinguished. The transformation to the Cour des Miracles was admirably contrived by Benn Toff's merry band of stage staff and this scene in the Catacombs is good enough of its kind.

Far less happy are the costumes for the motley rout which surrounds Clopin Trouillfou. Rags are not easy to design but just how effective they can be has been demonstrated by many a French company. Benois has fallen into the trap of thinking that an excess of colour replaces a paucity of design. The result is a humble-bumble of rags and patches. I do not lightly forgive a brace of prostitutes in 'thirties garden-party dresses.

The arrival of Esmeralda herself into this contrived scruffiness passes almost unnoticed; her gypsy costume is the most contrived of the lot—Stock Exchange Operatic Romany.

In the later scenes—at the Ball given by Fleur-de-Lys' parents and for the character divertissement in the final act—some of the costumes are well-designed individually. The costumes for some Lute Players, for the male Buffoons (the female ones have strayed from a revue), for the Tyrolean dance and the Tarantella are charming by themselves; in juxtaposition to their surroundings they loose everything. Here again, a greater depth to the stage would undoubtedly have helped them.

As the ballet proceeded, it became obvious that Nicola Benois had fallen between not two stools but a whole banquet of them. His designs had none of the soft charm of the Romantic era nor the possibly more garish excitement of a contemporary reconstruction. Only in the above-mentioned thieves' kitchen in the Catacombs and in a later scene in Esmeralda's Cell in Gaol, did the settings achieve any distinction.

I would like to think I had never seen a Banqueting Hall in which no end of mediaeval hocus-pocus congregated to create no effect other than bewilderment on both sides of the footlights. Also would that my memory gloss over a Captain of the King's Guard garbed for all the world as a pantomime principal boy—be-plumed, be-furred, be-tighted but not be-sung. I would also like to think that an experienced designer had not been responsible for a row of houses (in the final act) whose top windows stared blankly into the navels of the dancers standing around (a Snow Whitish effect this); nor for a Notre-Dame fashioned from pink icing sugar. All this I saw, all this my memory persists in retaining.

That Benois was working under extreme difficulties must have been obvious to everyone. But the point of a designer is that he shall overcome such difficulties and make the stage a place of wonder. I still am wondering—wondering why a firm hand could not have been taken before the ballet became bogged down in such a way; all honours on this occasion go to a stage staff who coped with the many scene-changes with an efficiency that made one always hope they were going to have something better to change.

Peter Williams.

STOP PRESS

THE first fortnight of Festival Ballet's summer season at the Royal Festival Hall presented a fascinating study of a ballet in flux. To say their *Esmeralda* was changed from performance to performance is probably an exaggeration, but certainly I saw no two identical performances. At first the changes were small, chiefly omissions—then out of the blue came sensation!

The printed programme breathed no word of it and when during the last Act Esmeralda entered with her funereal procession immediately after an abridged Oriental Dance, one presumed that a drastic and final cut had been made in the ever-dwindling number of divertissements. But when Esmeralda was saved from the gallows by the timely intervention of Phoebus; when she was restored to, of all people, Gringoire, and Phoebus bounced off happily with Fleur; when Frollo was led off to execution and Quasimodo committed suicide for apparently no better reason than that his death was moderately effective in the earlier version; when the townspeople of Paris launched into a celebrationary divertissement and Esmeralda and Gringoire obliged with a couple of numbers from their repertory (he performed what only yesterday had been the Oriental Dance, and she did a new variation), while a puzzled audience glanced furtively at their misleading programmes and wondered whether they were getting the right kind of sleep; when all these remarkable things happened — one slowly realised that the ballet had been changed a little more than somewhat.

In its present state it would obviously be unfair to criticise the finalised production, even though the ending was presumably not as impromptu as it looked. Apparently it is to be changed again before it reaches its destination of a definitive version and further comment will be withheld until the Press are invited to view the finished article.

Meanwhile we merely report the teething troubles of Festival Ballet's huge new baby, and congratulate the company on the fortitude and resource it is showing in dealing with them. But we do feel that it would have been a courteous gesture if some notice of Esmeralda's reprieve and the changed ending had been slipped into the programme. **C.B.**

"Fool and Maniac"

Continuing the series of articles in which A. V. Coton assesses how the theories laid down by Noverre in his great book are being followed today, we come to the non-performing side of ballet—the critic and the audience.

"If one were to ask all those who applaud indifferently, and who would think they had wasted the price of admission if they had not stamped their feet or clapped their hands, for their opinion of dancing and ballets, what would be their answers? 'Marvellous,' they would reply, 'they are wonderfully good'. Point out to them that alterations are necessary, that the dancing is indifferent, that the ballets have but the single merit of design, that expressiveness has been neglected, that pantomime is unknown, that the themes are senseless, that the subjects intended to be expressed are too trivial or too vast, and you will be regarded as a fool and a maniac".

by A. V. COTON

THE most common shape that the supposed "fool and maniac" takes today in the world of ballet is the critic, for it is his melancholy duty to record as honestly as possible all that he sees. Rarely do his attendances at ballets provide him with that sensation of having experienced a memorable occasion.

If the editor or publisher for whom he works permits him—even within a small limit of words—to express an uninhibited opinion, he more often than not finds that what he has said displeases more people than it satisfies.

By the nature of criticism (the expression of an opinion based on knowledge and taste, and unrestricted by personal considerations for those who have created the work under review), he who commits to paper a verdict which is an individual assessment of the work of ballet will inevitably have outraged the sensibilities of the majority of both audience and performers.

The audience-members will resent his having seen more deeply into the work than they, with their restricted experience, lack of appreciation of artistic form, and personal embroilment with the careers of those dancers for whom they have formed some attachment, however imprecise. The performers taking part will resent an opinion adverse from their own if they have felt that the ballet was interesting and well performed. If it was one of those ballets which is acknowledged a masterpiece and it received a comprehensive performance from all taking part, then they will the more expect that all critics shall write what are called "good notices": he who calls attention to the few imperfections revealed will be rated a miserable curmudgeon, satisfied only with pulling to pieces the honest work of dancers trying to do their best.

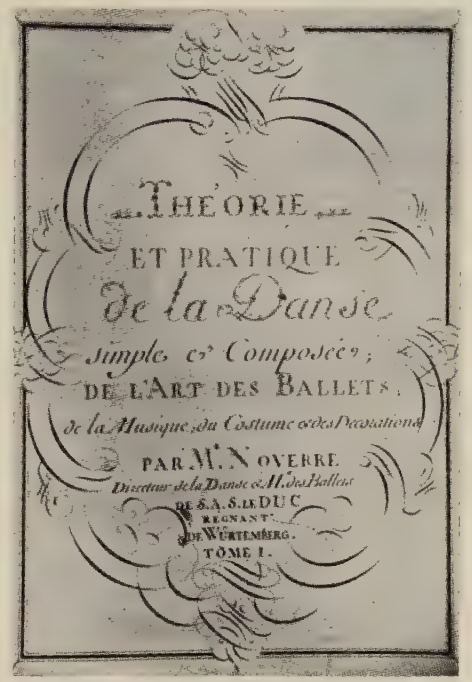
Why do you read criticism?

It would be tedious to recite once again all the arguments for and against criticism; theatre artists of the highest rank invariably welcome critical discussion of their work, if they know that he who discusses is inspired mainly by a passion for perfection as real as that they themselves know. Performers of lower ranking are invariably found to be those most resentful of the critic's function.

The public which reads criticism does so for a variety of reasons: to find whether one, or several, critics express an opinion acceptable to themselves; to discover how many divergent points of view can be expressed apropos the same performance; to find whether a concensus of criticisms can reveal accurately the precise worth of a ballet which the reader has not yet seen and which he may avoid if enough adverse criticism persuades him that it is worth missing.

How often do either the spectators or the performers consider what makes the critic take up his particular calling? how much do they try to imagine his point of view? how many of them think that the critic is worth his place in the complicated world of Art? Perhaps the critic should reveal a little more of his attitude and basic opinions than he customarily does, and by so doing he may put before both performers and spectators a wider picture than they normally see when considering a particular work of ballet, a company which has their interest, a season which holds a lively share of thrills and disappointments for all of them.

Art does not exist in a vacuum and works of



The title page of the original Theorie et Pratique de la Danse *by Noverre, quotations from which form the basis of this series of articles.*

art, whether novels, poems, sonatas, ballets or paintings have no meaning and no effect unless (or until) they are "being consumed". The poem fires the senses, stirs the imagination or touches the mind into speculation only by being read; a ballet has meaning only in performance before an audience.

The nature of theatrical performance requires that he who acts, sings or dances shall be aware, and aware in a very special and super-sensitive way, of the figures in the auditorium; his function is to project some aspect of human character revealing itself under the particular conditions which form the plot, libretto or scenario of that work. But he cannot project into "nothingness"; he must both see and sense his audience, and at a certain point in the action (desirably in the earliest phases of the play, opera or spectacle) he must feel their combined sympathy expressing itself through the silent attention they offer to him.

Part of the performing skill of all kinds of theatre artists is in acquiring this sensitivity towards the audience and in projecting the character in such a way that it challenges, and therefore stimulates, attention from those watching. It follows that every performance in a theatre is absolute and unique, for no audience contains exactly the same numbers at successive performances, and each audience—as a mass, but a mass acting in a concerted way emotionally—differs from every other group of theatre spectators.

The audience as individuals are rarely, if ever, aware consciously of their joint relationship yet they will be aware, after a good performance, of having partaken in a species of "ceremonial"—a ceremonial which, in its way, is as comforting, stimulating or exciting as any other kind of gathering of humans assembled together in spiritual unison.

The theatre artist suffers from his audiences, probably as often as he is stimulated by them; though it is one of the mercies of the theatre life that the actor (singer, dancer) never can work out in absolute detail just why communication failed or became disrupted or was never totally established. This failure of an audience to project the necessary sympathy towards the performers occurs under several kinds of circumstances.

The artist not the ballet

The most usual "bad audience" is one containing too large a proportion of people not basically interested in the content of the play, or other spectacle.

Another type of "bad audience" (though the performers will rarely realise, or alternatively, admit this) is that which is too familiar with the matter being performed. Such an audience—and it is one frequently found attending ballets nowadays—is that containing a very high proportion of spectators who are present to see one particular artist, not the entire spectacle. They already are very familiar with the ballets being presented and their presence is due to their desire to give most of their attention to their particular idol; if other participants in the action give outstandingly good interpretations, these will be seen as blurs on the performance of the idol.

This kind of "selective audience" is, of course, a common phenomenon in the worlds of both opera and ballet today: it can be said—and there is no absolute proof or disproof possible—that such audiences are the primary cause of the contemporary decline of the art of ballet.

Only the critic, of course, is permitted ever to point out that any kind of art is suffering from a lack of what we must call "art"; this does not mean that the critic necessarily discovers sooner than the performers or the management of any company what is amiss when the company begins to give more and more performances lacking in both complete projection from the players, and complete receptive sympathy from the regular audience.

Decline in success

The members of the company, and many others too, are aware that total theatrical effect is reached on fewer and fewer occasions; but it is part of their professional attitude to ignore this and to work more determinedly at successive performances in the hope of breaking down the false atmosphere which is generated.

The decline which set in in ballet only a few years ago grew directly from the fact that ballet had become, suddenly as measured by years, too much of a success. We may interpret this as an inevitable and historically necessary swing of the pendulum, for it is the nature of the arts that each in turn assumes a position of dominance inside each culture; now poetry, now the novel or painting or drama, seems the purest means whereby artists can most quickly and surely communicate their "weltanschauung" to their contemporaries.

Ballet assumed this position within the English culture during and soon after the

Continued on page twenty-five

curtain up!

The male dancer here is David Poole of the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet isn't he? Not hard to guess that in one. But who is the ballerina he is supporting? Well, actually she is not a ballerina at all in the generally accepted sense. She is better known as a delightful actress and film star from Scandinavia; she is, in fact, Mai Zetterling.

In the film Dance Little Lady, *Mai plays the role of a ballerina and she dances the title role in* Giselle *in which she is seen in this photograph.*

Ordeal upon Ordeal

TO appear in any role for the first time is ordeal enough, to follow a great international artist in it is even worse. But to come on the stage and find the ballerina, with whom you are playing a big dramatic scene, is not there is a nightmare too dreadful to contemplate.

All this happened to Michael Hogan during his first performance of Claude Frollo, the priest, (first created by Anton Dolin) in the Festival Ballet *La Esmeralda*.

The curtain went up on the scene where Esmeralda is pining away in gaol, but the stage was empty. On came Hogan to beg her to comply with his not-very-honorable desires. He had then to play the whole scene by himself which he did most admirably with a wealth of gesticulation and praying. Not until the curtain was about to come down was a tearful Esmeralda dragged onto the stage by her captors.

It was lamentable that a ballerina should miss a cue, even worse that the stage staff had not the wit to hold the curtain until she was on, but we are grateful for the opportunity of seeing a really fine piece of mime from Hogan. Festival Ballet ought to be grateful that they have a young artist with the intelligence to get them out of such a disastrous situation. The result was that 95% of the audience had no idea that anything was wrong.

Ubiquitous cupid

AND so it goes on; cupid's darts in all directions. Noël Rossana that most valuable soloist of Festival Ballet got married to John Gorst in Buckinghamshire during the second week of Festival Ballet's London season. But the path to wedded bliss was not come by all that easy. Twice the wedding had to be postponed: once because the company was touring and later because of family illness. Some of Noël's friends in the ballet acted as bridesmaids.

A few weeks previously, Meriel Evans, of the Sadler's Wells Ballet, married the Hon. Luke Asquith, son of one of the Lords of Appeal (Lord Asquith of Bishopstone). Then two more members of the same company married each other—Brenda Taylor and Desmond Doyle. As if a panting cupid had not had enough by that time, he then decided to aim his arrow right into the middle of *Dance and Dancers*. John Percival who contributes regularly to these columns, and to this feature in particular, married Betty Thorne-Large; Clive Barnes, our assistant editor, was best man.

To cap the whole thing, Angela Ellis (daughter of Madame Rambert and Ashley Dukes) presented her husband, David with a daughter called Matilda. The Ellises, who direct Ballet Workshop, now have even more on their hands as they had their first child last year. Nobody seems more delighted than four-times-grandmother Rambert.

We know our readers will join us in wishing all these matches and hatches our very best wishes for all happiness in the future.

At home abroad

WE were particularly pleased to hear of the success scored by Don Gillies with his ballet, *I Want! I Want!*, given at this year's Canadian Ballet Festival. Gillies who is remembered here for his dancing with the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet, was also choreographer for *The Golden Pear*, probably the most genuinely experimental work yet seen at Ballet Workshop. In both these works the choreographer was also responsible for the theme and the very original settings and costumes, as well as dancing the leading role. Let us hope that his former neglect of talents by English companies will not prevent this gifted young man from returning to work here again.

Another young English dancer who has been doing well abroad is Michael Ashlin, currently a member of the Royal Theatre, Stockholm. His ballet *Concerto Romano* to music of Corelli, won first prize in a competition for young choreographers. Now there is a chance that Ashlin may join the Swedish writer and impresario, Bengt Hagar, in forming a new company. The repertoire would be mainly of modern works but there is a possibility of at least one revival from the repertory of the famous Ballets Suedois which exercised such a profound influence during its short life in the 'twenties by reason of its experimental policy.

Michael Ashlin was a contributor to DANCE AND DANCERS in the early days of the magazine and we are delighted to be able to record his success in this new sphere.

The fairest after all

AS we keep on getting letters from people telling us how unfair the queue ticket system at Covent Garden is, we should like to draw attention to the queues to buy tickets at the Royal Festival Hall for the Vienna State Opera. It must, of course, be very irritating to "Queue for a ticket which entitles one to queue later in the day" but how much worse to have to stand in a queue for a minimum of six hours in order to be served at all as happened at Festival Hall.

Brightly dawned that Parents Day

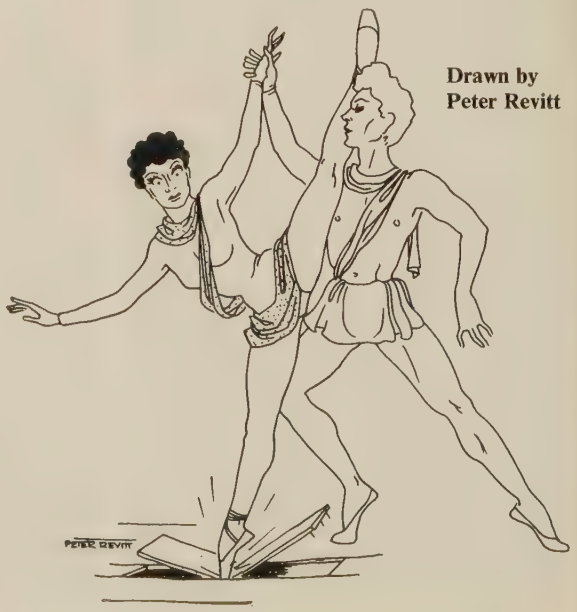
PARENTS Day conjures-up gloomy forebodings in the minds of those who are not parents. The public performance of other people's children raises no swelling of the non-paternal or non-maternal breast. But this day at the Arts Educational School at Tring Park was different from the usual run of such entertainments.

The park of the Rothschild house in Hertfordshire is beautiful and large, the open-air stage has been very well managed and the performance given by the students was excellently produced. It seemed a good idea for the students to give excerpts of *Les Sylphides* and parts of *Giselle* Act I because they instill in the dancer an understanding of the best in ballet. Nor were the performances embarassing in any way. The fact that Alicia Markova was in the audience could have brought a rush of blood to the head to everyone concerned because these are her two great ballets. But Markova obviously enjoyed it all and spoke most enthusiastically about the performance so everyone was happy.

In two of the ballets, Markova's niece,

It's bound to happen—

Sometime in a ballet by Serge Lifar



Drawn by Peter Revitt

Susie North, appeared. Like her aunt has always been, she was dead on her cue.

Our First Ladies in good voice

THERE are often moments when one would like to be in two places at once but seldom so much as at the end of the last Wells season at Covent Garden which coincided with the last night of Ballet Rambert at Sadler's Wells Theatre. It has become the custom for both De Valois and Rambert to make enthusiastic curtain speeches at the end of their respective seasons. Imagine both of them making speeches at the same time in the same city!

In hers, Dame Ninette paid tribute to Margot Fonteyn who has now given twenty years of devoted service to The Sadler's Wells Ballet. In the briefest speech ever made from any stage, Fonteyn declared she had nothing to say until she retires. Let us hope she keeps quiet for many years to come.

Fonteyn for President

IT would be hard to imagine a more suitable successor to Dame Adeline Genée as President of the Royal Academy of Dancing than Margot Fonteyn. She holds not only an unchallenged place in the artistic sphere but also a particularly warm place in the hearts of her colleagues and public alike.

Dame Adeline, though Danish by birth, has always been thought of as one of the best-loved ballerinas of England owing to the years she reigned at the Empire Theatre and owing to the fact that she raised ballet in England out of the rut into which it had got struck. Fonteyn, more than anyone, has brought international renown to British ballet. The Royal Academy chooses its presidents well.

The rough with the smooth

CONGRATULATIONS to Festival Ballet for a particularly delightful advertisement of *La Esmeralda* which appeared in a London evening paper.

Boldly they quoted not only three eulogistic extracts from reviews but also three remarks which severely attacked the ballet. The implication is one with which DANCE AND DANCERS has always agreed.

The job of a critic is to help form public taste, but it is the public itself which must finally judge a work. Good, bad or indifferent, a ballet needs to be seen.

The nicest touch of all, incidently, was the fact that the advertisement quoted two passages from one paper—one was as enthusiastic as the other was damning.

Royal and loyal supporter

PRINCESS MARIE LOUISE, the Royal patron of Festival Ballet, certainly does not treat her position as a sinecure. Frequently during the London season she is to be seen in the Ceremonial Box at the Royal Festival Hall. It is greatly to her credit that she lends the company not just her name but also her active support.

Bang, goes another choreographer

IF we don't watch out we shall lose all the choreographers we have spent so many years in building-up. Alan Carter, once with Sadler's Wells where he showed great promise as a choreographer then with the St. James Ballet later at the Empire and more recently in films, has taken up the position of Ballet Master at the State Theatre in Munich. With him goes his dancer wife, Joan Harris. Alan will also mount several ballets for the company. At the moment, he will remain for two years but there is every possibility that England may lose this talented couple for longer than that.

A baby brother for us

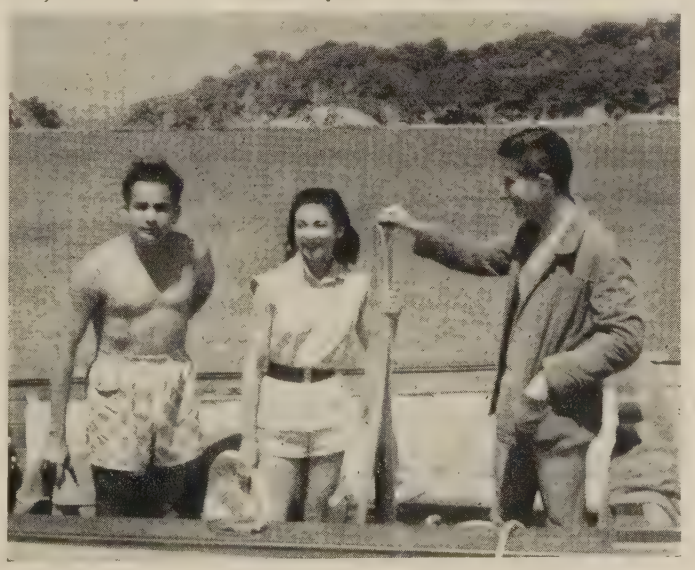
NEARLY five years ago, DANCE AND DANCERS was born. It was followed two years later by MUSIC AND MUSICIANS and last year the family was added to with PLAYS AND PLAYERS.

Now we are in production yet again. On September 15 we are expecting another addition to our rapidly growing family for FILMS AND FILMING is to make its appearance. It is edited by Peter Brinson who has contributed to DANCE AND DANCERS from time to time and who was largely responsible for the first 3D ballet film, *Black Swan*, as well as for the excellent season of ballet films recently given at the National Film Theatre.

FILMS AND FILMING will be published on the 15th of each month and will contain all news and pictures of films and personalities of the screen in all its aspects.

happy birthday to...

		Sept.
David Poole	Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet	17
Nora de Wal	De Cuevas Grand Ballet	18
Michael Somes	Sadler's Wells Ballet	28
		Oct.
Ninette d'Amboise	New York City Ballet	1
Tanaquil LeClercq	New York City Ballet	2
Jon Waks	Festival Ballet	2
Andree Howard	Choreographer	3
Louise Brown		5
Helene Trailine	Ballets Janine Charrat	6
Denys Palmer	Television	9
Douglas Steuart	Sadler's Wells Ballet	9
Jill Gregory	Sadler's Wells Ballet	10
Pauline Clayden	Sadler's Wells Ballet	12



During July, after she had appeared at the Granada Festival in Spain, Margot Fonteyn spent her holiday in the South of France. At Paul-Louis Weiller's house near Toulon she got the rest she deserved before her next long and arduous season, during which she is to recreate the title rôle in Fokine's Firebird.

Fonteyn is seen here with her host, Paul-Louis Weiller, and a friend from Panama.

Photo: Lido

Dancer you will know

In Vilia *Photo: Rimis*

JEFFREY KOVEL

Born in Newcastle, Australia, in 1934. *Started dancing in* 1942, *first with Grance Norman* (*R.A.D.*) *and later with Shirley Warburton* (*Cecchetti*). *Later studied at Francis Sculley's school in Sydney and joined, in* 1950, *the Australian National Ballet. Came to England in* 1952 *and studied for a time at the Sadler's Wells School. Walked on at Covent Garden. Joined Festival Ballet in* 1953, *under name of Jeffrey Smith.*

Principal creations: Dragonfly and Bill in Alice in Wonderland; *Major-Domo and Waiter in* Vilia; *Buffoon and Tarantella in* Esmeralda. *Roles: Fritz and Trepak in* Nutcracker; *Polovstian Boy in* Prince Igor; *Groom in* Petrouchka; *in* Symphony for Fun.

KOVEL'S stage debut in England, on the first night of *Alice in Wonderland*, was promising enough to mark him out immediately as a dancer we would one day know. Small and wiry, he danced the difficult role of the middle Dragonfly with complete unselfconciousness.

Since then it has been possible to notice him in the *corps de ballet*—occasionally rather too possible as his stage manners are not always of the best. During his first season he danced the Bouffon in *Nutcracker*, and although he then appeared as a pale shadow to Trunoff, his dancing had obvious promise.

This season has shown him as an *Esmeralda* buffoon (with Ronald Emblen) and as one of the new "Three Ivans" in *The Nutcracker*, with Emblen and Russell Kerr. In these and smaller roles he emerges as a character and *demi-caractere* dancer of some ability and considerable promise. He works hard on stage, always giving of his best. His technique, already strong, is improving, and he should soon be ready for larger solo roles. He has something of the quality of Alexander Grant and is the type of dancer who is shown to his best advantage in Festival Ballet's repertoire.

The ballet in Die Fledermaus *which added such a distinguished contribution to the whole production.*

Right. The death of Hercules. The final moment in Charrat's Herakles *with Esteban Cerda (left), as the Friend of Herakles, and Vladimir Oukthomsky in the title role (supported, right).*

Lakeside Festival

Using its natural surroundings, Bregenz makes a valuable contribution to the spate of summer festivals.

by PETER WILLIAMS

"BUT where on earth is Bregenz?" ask most people vaguely when you tell them that you are going there. I must admit that I was rather vague myself. On the map it appears at the extreme toe of Lake Constance on a little tongue of Austria bounded immediately by the Swiss and German frontiers (both are little more than 15 minutes away in a car). Deepening shades on map also show that mountains are near at hand.

The territory in which Bregenz lies had its own culture before the Romans conquered it. Their occupation lasted for 400 years which brought with it Roman culture. In recent years Voralberg and Bregenzerwald have been rather separated from the rest of Austria owing to the mountain barrier; since the war a greater tie with the culture of Vienna has been achieved by the annual festival in Bregenz which brings people from all over the world though mainly from other parts of Austria.

It would hardly be possible to find a more geographically perfect surrounding for a festival with the lake in front, and mountains at the back dribbling gently into the town. With the aid of a funicular, it is possible to land in the heart of these mountains within 15 minutes. There the air is like champagne and the view over snow-capped peaks is one I personally shall never forget. It is not out of place to mention that the food is of an excellence and cheapness I have not encountered since the war.

Though all this may read like a travel journal it is necessary because its geography has played an important part in forming the nature of the Bregenz Festival, particularly the lake.

The bat on the water

We have today all kinds of strange entertainments on ice so it does not seem to be any less extraordinary to have opera on water. This year's choice—Strauss' *Die Fledermaus*—is not perhaps so suitable to this treatment as must have been the works of previous years which included *A Night in Venice* and *1001 Nights* of Strauss and *Boccaccio* of Suppé. Apart from the ballroom scene, *Fledermaus* is a rather intimate opera but it has been blown-up into a lavish spectacle with the aid of a massive setting completely surrounded by water, soloists, stars and musicians from the Vienna State Opera, a large local chorus and Ballets de France de Janine Charrat which is the reason for the inclusion of this festival in a dance magazine.

The stadium holds over 6,000 people and is situated on the banks of the lake. The stage is a man-made island and the permanent setting consists of a centre section wherein the more intimate scenes are played—the whole section moves forwards or backwards according to the requirements of the scene.

This *Chinoiserie* pavilion is flanked by two semi-circular verandas which house the orchestra and the singing chorus. The conductor is rowed out to a tiny island rostrum.

The style of the performance was immaculate all through with Wilma Lipp as the perfect Adele. Ljuba Welitsch brought a great sense of gaiety to Rosalinda. Also notable was the Gabriel von Eisenstein of Fred Liewehr.

There were two sections of dancing in the ballroom scene with choreography by Janine Charrat—Three character dances (Russian, Bohemian and Hungarian) followed later by a long ballet to the *Blue Danube* Waltz.

It is not often that the ballet in opera takes more than second place, but on this occasion it was as distinguished as the singing—and that is saying a good deal. Charrat has used the company well and all the principals have small variations while the soloists and *corps de ballet* have some interesting *entrées, pas* and groups.

Charrat has imposed her own neo-classic style on to the lushness of the Strauss waltz and the combination is a happy one. Particularly effective was a series of *jetés* by Maria Fris. On the large stage, Charrat has been able to expand and she has used this extra area to the best possible effect. Taken out of its context, the ballet would be a notable opening work in any programme.

The costumes for the girls—all in white—were charming; those for the boys with balloon-sleeved shirts and white satin trousers were reminiscent of seaside pierrots.

On other evenings, Ballets de France danced their own repertoire in the Stathalle. The three works not seen in London were *Pas de Trois Royal* by Yves Brieux, *Ballade* and *Etrangère à Paris*, both by Charrat.

Pas de Trois Royal is one of the most difficult *pas de trois* I have ever seen and it was beautifully danced by Charrat, Hélène Traline and Peter van Dijk. But the choreography was too difficult to create any great effect. Brieux has fallen into the trap that ensnares most teachers who turn to choreography—he has strung together all the most difficult *enchaînements* he gives in class regardless of the fact that they are not necessarily effective in the theatre. Nor has he in any way realised the grandeur of the Brahms' *Variations on the St Antony Corale*. On this occasion it was possibly more noticeable than is usual in the theatre for the music was magnificently played by the Vienna Symphony Orchestra. To me it is unattractive to see dancers in very grand classical tutus scrubbing about on the floor. This type of ballet is more suited to all-over tights. However nothing appeared to be too difficult for these three particular dancers and Peter van Dijk danced a variation that was worth making any exhausting journey to see.

Romance in moonlight and street

Ballade, to Chopin music, is one of those Romantic *pas de deux* about innocent young girls and temptation. It was excellently danced by Maria Fris and Jean-Bernard Lemoin. She is a very strong dancer with an interesting quality that should be developed. He turns remarkably. Some of the choreography was very good but Charrat, like Brieux, tends to make too much use of the floor.

The adventures of an innocent young girl in Paris are not the sort of adventures that I personally find very exciting any longer but there is no doubt that *Etrangère à Paris* has a certain appeal for certain audiences. *Clichés* abound—paper-sellers, artists, old roués and so on. But this is not the type of work in which Charrat is really at home though she gives a very amusing performance herself of the young girl. Ballets of this kind really need to be made by a Roland Petit or a Gene Kelly.

The remainder of the programme was made up of the Grieg *Concerto* perfectly given, as always, by Charrat and van Dijk; an exciting *Black Swan* in which Hélène Traline was more brilliant than she ever appeared in London: and *Herakles*.

In the latter Oukthomsky danced the title role and brought more to it than did Lemoin. It is a ballet which improves greatly on further acquaintance and the *pas de deux* for Heracles and Iole, as a Deer, is one of the most interesting Charrat has ever done.

There is no doubt that Ballets de France enjoyed an enormous success in Bregenz and this was helped by the fact that the audience appeared to be most knowledgeable. I cannot help feeling that one day a full-length production of *Swan Lake* on the lake would be as sensational as it might be beautiful.

"FOOL AND MANIAC"

Continued from page twenty-one

turmoil and disturbances of war; the possible subjects for new ballets, and their varied means of artistic interpretation, became exhausted after the brief golden period of the late 1940's. Whether it will next be the turn of another theatre art, or of a literary form, or of music, to be the most immediately successful conveyor of new thoughts and feelings, no-one can say.

Meanwhile the continuous existence of ballet companies is geared more to the exploitation of star talent in dancing than to novelty of choreographic form, or daring of thematic experiment; and though no living viewer of the scene can assess how, when and where the declining process began, some recorder of the future will correctly pinpoint the year in which ballet in England started its downhill slide into mere routineering, steady competence, unadventurous repetition of already established successes.

Part of his assessment will be the impact that the audience of the 1940's and 1950's made upon the ballet of their day; and he will consider that the ballet of that time was precipitated into sterility largely through having gathered an audience which was too much interested in the dancer and which never understood what was meant by the art of ballet.

Such reflections as these are part of the dismal task of the critic viewing the prospect of the ballet of his time: and it may be some comfort to recall that in every age of ballet's uproarious vitality there was a critic steadily reading the evidence which persuaded him that—whether he liked it or no—the pendulum must continue swinging if the art was not to die out entirely. **A.V.C.**

NEW BOOKS

A Catalogue of 120 *Dance Films* compiled by Peter Brinson (The Dancing Times, 2s, 6d.)

IF the season of ballet films, organised by the compiler of this catalogue at the National Film Theatre, is any judge at all then it becomes obvious that the film can make the greatest contribution in recording a dance work and the particular qualities of the dancer.

This list contains the dance films of sixteen countries together with a short description, technical details, the library which holds the film and the cost of hiring.

All of which is quite invaluable to film societies and ballet clubs and all those people who wish to entertain their friends, relations and enemies to an evening of great dancing. **P.W.**

NEW RECORDS

Reviewed by DAVID HUNT

Ballet to Rimbaud

Les Illuminations (Britten). Peter Pears (tenor), Strings of New Symphony Orchestra (Eugene Goossens). One side of Decca LXT2941. 1 12 in. 36*s*. 5½*d*.

ANYONE buying this first recording of Britten's *Les Illuminations* as a souvenir of Ashton's ballet of the same name for the New York City Ballet will be pleased to discover how vividly the music brings back memories of Ashton's fine choreography. Not only did the ballet's scenario follow the images and incidents suggested by Rimbaud's poems practically to the letter, but there was an equally convincing parallel between the choreography and Britten's wonderful music.

Paradoxically, *Les Illuminations* lacked the sense of unity that another ballet to a song cycle—Tudor's *Dark Elegies*—succeeded in achieving. The reason is not hard to seek: whereas Tudor ignored specific verbal references in favour of an attempt at reproducing the over-all mood and atmosphere of Mahler's music, Ashton's ballet relied on an understanding of what was being sung (and in a foreign language), if the meaning of the ballet was to be grasped. Which probably goes to prove that movement, décor, and music are more than adequate means of balletic expression without the added complication of sung poetry.

This is a superb performance of the work, beautifully recorded, that will give ever-increasing pleasure to its possessor. The reverse is devoted to an equally fine performance of Britten's marvellous *Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings*.

Job's comforter

Job. (Vaughan Williams). LPO (Sir Adrian Boult). Decca LXT2937. 1 12 in. 36*s*. 5½*d*.

THE earliest of De Valois' works to retain a place in the repertoire, *Job* started off as a ballet in search of a choreographer. The Blake scholar, Geoffrey Keynes, basing his synopsis on Blake's illustrations to the Book of Job, had Vaughan Williams write the music. Gwendolen Raverat designed settings and costumes and next tried to interest Diaghilev in the project. The answer came back —"too English, too old-fashioned".

Vaughan Williams' score first heard in concert performances in October, 1930, won immediate recognition. De Valois enthusiastically took up the original idea and *Job* as we know it had its first performance at the Cambridge Theatre on June 5, 1931, the music being re-scored by Constant Lambert for smaller orchestra.

Except for the insinuating saxophone that lends a touch of blues melancholy to the *Dance of Job's Comforters*, the score has retained its freshness and has also served the composer as a gold mine of ideas for subsequent development. Perhaps that is the reason why *Job* continues to sound as if it were written only the other day—later Vaughan Williams works have continually borrowed so generously from it: the *Serenade to Music*, the Fourth and Fifth Symphonies; and more recently the organ-orchestral dialogue of the *Sinfonia Antartica's Landscape* movement has been taken over from the *Vision of Heaven* of *Job's* Sixth Scene, even if nobody noticed at the time.

Impressive though it all is, the music's world is more of philosophic meditation than of the theatre; its spiritual turmoil and exaltation are on too mystic a plane to provide the strong emotional and rhythmic contrasts that a narrative ballet (or *Masque for Dancing*, as the programme has it) cries out for.

Boult's performance rises to the score's sublime heights: there is beautiful playing by violinist Joseph Shadwick in *Elihu's Dance of Youth and Beauty* and the whole is given wide-range, rich recording. Listening to it away from the theatre increases one's admiration for it as music. But at the same time this confirms my earlier impression that the intensity of Blake's vision called for less pastoral serenity and a broader dramatic treatment of a subject that takes in its stride such things as the Sons of God, a Miltonic Satan, Plague, Pestilence, Famine, Battle, Murder and Sudden Death.

Waltziana

Tchaikovsky Waltzes. Philharmonic Orchestra of Los Angeles (Alfred Wallenstein). Brunswick AXL2012. 1 10 in. 27*s*. 3½d.

OF the six waltzes gathered together on this record, four were written to be danced: the *Sleeping Beauty Waltz*, the A major *Swan Lake* waltz (No. 20), the Waltz of the Flowers from *Casse-Noisette* and the waltz from the second act of *Eugene Onegin*. The waltz movements from the *Serenade for Strings* and the *Fifth Symphony* have also been used for ballet in Balanchine's *Serenade* and Massine's *Les Presages* respectively. The performances are slick and vulgar, the recording pinched and edgy.

Taras-Mozartiana

Tarasiana (Tchaikovsky: *Mozartiana*). Slovak Philharmonic Orchestra (Vaclav Talich). Supraphon LPM65. 1 10 in. 27*s*. 3½*d*.

JOHN TARAS' *pas-de-deux* for Rosella Hightower and Serge Golovine, which had the almost unbelievable title *Tarasiana*, was set to one of the movements of Tchaikovsky's Fourth Suite. Subtitled *Mozartiana*, the Suite is in four movements, each an arrangement of a single Mozart work and carried out partly as "homage" and partly as an exercise. The final movement used by Taras is an orchestration of the piano variations on a theme from Gluck's opera, *The Pilgrims to Mecca*. This well played and recorded performance, the first complete one to be issued, will be of interest to collectors of out-of-the-way curiosities and to Taras admirers.

Serenade at last

Serenade (Tchaikovsky). *Boléro* (Ravel). Philharmonia Orchestra (Paul Kletzki). Columbia 33CX1164. 1 12 in. 36*s*. 5½*d*.

BALANCHINE admirers have had to wait a long time for this first LP recording of Tchaikovsky's popular *Serenade*, but it is well worth the wait. Before seeing Balanchine's ballet to it of the same name, I had always admired the music, but listening to it gain in this superb performance, I realised how Balanchine had taught me to love it all the more, even to the extent of wanting to play the two final movements in reverse order so as to recapture memories of his wonderful choreography in correct sequence of its performance. With the possible exception of Fokine's *Carnaval*, this is for me the ballet in which movement comes closest to seeming the visible embodiment of an already existing musical work.

The performance of *Boléro* is as Ravel asked for it to be played, but as it rarely is—a slow, unaccelerated tempo throughout and a strict firm beat with no uncalled for *rubato* or rhythmic flexibility, combining to give all the sultry langour and powerfully hypnotic monotony with the minimum of vulgarity.

A rousing performance of Smetana's *Bartered Bride* Overture is thrown in for good measure and comes before the Ravel. Recording leaves nothing to be desired.

Musical integrity in destiny

Les Présages (Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 5 in E Minor). Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra (Antal Dorati). Mercury MG50008. 1 12-in. 36*s*. 5½*d*.

THERE is a famous story of Sir Thomas Beecham conducting a performance of Massine's *Présages* in which he all but killed the dancers by taking Tchaikovsky's Symphony at something like twice the *tempi* to which they were accustomed and then at the end remarking to the orchestra leader, "that made them hop, did it not?"

Whether or not he was taking revenge on behalf of the purists who resented Massine's use of symphonies for ballet, the fact remains that in this particular case, the choreography demands remarkably few liberties in the music's performance —fewer in fact than are sometimes taken by "prima donna" conductors in concert performances.

Antal Dorati, for many years musical director to the De Basil Company, conducts the work here with the utmost musical integrity; securing a virile and warmly expressive account of the score that brings out its heroic qualities rather that the introspective. The recording has outstanding bite and brilliance.

The lurid cover design is obviously based on Présages.

Thrice back to the harem

Schéhérazade. (Rimsky-Korsakov). Vienna State Opera Orchestra (Argeo Quadri). Nixa WLP5234. 1 12-in. 36*s*. 5½*d*. Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra (Antal Dorati). Mercury MG5009. 1 12-in. 36*s*. 5½*d*.

WITH new recordings of *Schéhérazade* coming thick and fast to leave no doubts as to its continued popularity, how astonishing to read that the wonderful piece had been voted a place in a recnt American "Most Boring Materpiece" contest. Among the five LP versions now to be had, these two latest recordings are outstanding for the impressive extent to which the engineers have succeeded in capturing Rimsky-Korsakov's gorgeous orchestral colours, there being little to choose between the sonorous richness and amazing brilliance of the sound in each case.

Quadri's is a more individual interpretation, always interesting and convincing, that makes the utmost of the music's subtle rhythmic variety. But those who like to listen to *Schéhérazade* in terms of the ballet (Rimsky-Korsakov himself asked the listener to attach his own narrative impressions to each movement), will be better off with the Mercury performance in which Dorati's tempi correspond more with how the music is given in the theatre. The playing in both cases is infinitely superior to that of the average ballet orchestra.

Iberian caprice

Capriccio Espagnol (Rimsky-Korsakov). Philharmonia Orchestra (Wilhelm Schüchter), part of one side of Parlophone PMC1003. 1 12-in. 36*s*. 5½*d*.

IN their choreography for *Capriccio Espagnol*, Massine and Argentinita closely followed the indications which appear in the score: *Alborada; Variations; Alborada; Gypsy Scene and Song; Asturian Fandango*. This new performance of the music has tremendous verve and excitement and the recording a richness and brilliance that easily out-classes all previous versions.

Capriccio Espagnol takes two thirds of one disc side, the remainder being devoted to equally thrilling performances of Tchaikovsky's *Marche Slave* and Ippolitov-Ivanov's *Caucasian Sketches*.

Dance and Dancers . . . . AT HOME

FESTIVAL BALLET

In and out of Nutcracker

CHANGES may come to Festival Ballet's production of *The Nutcracker* more slowly than they overtake *Esmeralda*, but they come just the same. Almost every season sees a renovated version and this present is no exception. The Prologue has been mercifully cut, and some worthwhile changes have been made in the second Act. The Arabian Dance has been omitted (for which relief much thanks), the Trepak is now given to three Bouffons instead of the one who once reigned in solitary state, and an excellent new version of the Spanish Dance, allocated to six dancers and choreographed by Pilar Lopez, has been substituted in place of the old wilting duet.

The first performance of the season on July 26 was given by Wright and Gilpin youthful and stylish in the first Act, and Krassovska and Briansky in the second. As Krassovska was soon after taken ill and had to have an operation and Briansky injured his ankle in this performance, it was only to be expected that they were below their usual form.

The divertissements were extremely well danced with verve and energy by Jeanette Minty and Keith Beckett as the Mechanical Dolls, Anita Landa and Louis Godfrey leading the Spanish Dance, Marilyn Burr leading the Mirlitons, Geoffrey Davidson and Keith Beckett in the Chinese Dance and Ronald Emblen, Russell Kerr and Jeffrey Kovel in the lively "Pianitsky-style" Trepak. Although many of the mime roles in the Prologue should be given with far more authority if the production is not to bore, creditable exceptions may be made of Geoffrey Davidson as Dr. Drosselmeyer and Monica Leigh as Clara, who also danced well.

An important change of cast took place on July 29, when Nora Kovach and Nicholai Polajenko appeared for the first time in both Acts of the company's *Nutcracker*. In the first Act Kovach danced with more warmth than one normally associates with a Snow Queen, but had undeniable distinction. In the second Act she danced a compromise between the company's standard version of the *pas de deux* and that version (seen last year) she brought out of Hungary, including the Sugar-Plum Fairy variation which I understand derives from Vaganova. Kovach's brand of classicism is more "baroque" than "romantic", and certain features of it, a leg bent in *arabesque* for example, seem strange to English audiences. Her regard for ornamentation and virtuosity could lead her into mannerisms; at the moment she is an interestingly vivid dancer whose future should be watched with the greatest care.

Polajenko is an unassuming partner, modest and direct, who lifts well and without fuss. His dancing has a stylish competence, with high accurate air-turns and precise beats; he uses his arms more eloquently than most. The phrasing of his dancing, like the poise of his body, is a little stiff.

Other performances of *The Nutcracker* showed Wright and Gilpin in the second Act. Wright dances this ballet very cleanly, it is probably her best achievement to date. Gilpin, also at his best at this performance, danced with controlled abandon and razor-sharp finish.

The flavour lost

THE Pas de Quatre is a delightful period-pastiche, very funny and in perfect taste when danced by Markova, Danilova and their peers. When danced by lesser luminaries the joke loses its savour. Both Krassovska and Anita Landa proved miscast as Taglioni, although Daphne Dale, Noel Rossana and Wright made something not displeasing out of their roles of Grahn, Cerito and Grisi. Subsequently Jeanette Minty and Monica Leigh were not greatly impressive as Grisi and Cerito respectively.

Rabovsky's Polovstian Chief

WITHOUT question the company's management regarded the first appearance of Istvan Rabovsky in Fokine's *Prince Igor* as an event of the utmost importance. The attention of the Press was specially drawn to it, and it was specifically advertised in the newspaper theatre columns. The management's opinion appeared to be vociferously endorsed by the capacity audience, many of whom must have cheered themselves hoarse in their gratitude. Yet I, perhaps expecting too much, was bitterly disappointed. In recent years I seem to have seen certainly Alexandre Kalioujny and Vassilie Trunoff, and possibly Poul Gnatt, give far better performances.

Rabovsky has a good and showy technique, and a sensational elevation. His characterisation of the Chief Polovstsian Warrior was restricted to a few grimaces and an estatic shaking of the head, which looked more epileptic than convincing. He introduced into the choreography a few of his "special" steps (some of which make him jump forward like a jack-knife, others in which he spirals through the air like a flying-saucer), he also performed a spectacular *grande pirouette*, for which effort he received a round of applause and a testimonial of greatness by an American opera critic in a daily newspaper. The real tragedy, for me, is not that Rabovsky is so vulgarly bad, but that with a little artistic guidance he could be so remarkably good. Perhaps one day he will get that guidance and then we will have a performance we can all cheer.

The company rose nobly to what they believed to be the occasion, and supported Rabovsky well. Anita Landa, and at later performances Shelagh Franklyn, were energetically uninhibited as the Polovstian Girl.

The Danube still flows

MASSINE'S *Le Beau Danube* has done sterling service in this repertory, and still comes up moderately fresh. Anita Landa has now improved on her performance as the Street Dancer, and Polajenko proved a gallant Hussar who carried off the difficult partnering with all the insouciance in the world, and danced with the right air of flamboyance in the ballet's finale. He should however give more thought to the role's characterisation if his portrayal is to stand comparison with the more familiar performances of Briansky and Gilpin. Peter White and Petrus Bosman appeared as the Strong Man and the Artist for the first time in London, and they too need to give more to their roles.

C.B.

Istavan Rabovsky as the Gold Slave and Nora Kovach as Zobeida in Festival Ballet's production of Fokine's Schéhérazade.

Odette from Denmark

AS KRASSOVSKA had to be rushed to hospital for an operation (from which we are happy to say she is making a splendid recovery), Toni Lander had to be brought over as guest artist earlier than was originally intended.

She is the wife of Harald Lander, the famous ballet master of The Royal Theatre, Copenhagen, now ballet master at the Paris Opéra. Her training has been mostly in Denmark and she has, of course, been brought up in the Bournonville school; in the past few years she has been training in Paris.

Although Lander has previously appeared in London with Original Ballet Russe and on television, her *Swan Lake* Act I with Festival Ballet was her first major appearance here. She is a fine technician with a nice line and excellent *équilibre* but her actual characterisation of the Odette role is, at the moment, lacking. She appears to be too cold and remote; there is no feeling of any real contact with Prince Siegfried. She also mars many of her movements with affected hands (some times at an angle of 45 degrees to the wrist) which were presumably intended to represent a swan's wing or neck but which actually achieved an unbecoming effect. To flick a wrist on the last bar of the music is quite out of keeping with this particular role (in the *Don Quixote pas de deux*, for instance, it would be excusible).

Many of these faults no doubt had a great deal to do with Lander's background—the *port de bras* of Bournonville is very different to that of Petipa—and given time she should develop into a most interesting Odette.

Not Carroll but good

IF it is possible to forget that Festival Ballet's *Alice in Wonderland* has anything to do with Lewis Carroll, then it makes very good entertainment. It is interesting that this work now enjoys a great success with the public. The alterations made by Michael Charnley and the general tightening-up since last year have all been for the better. Noël Rossana who now dances the title role in place of Belinda Wright seems physically more suited to the Victorian Miss who got involved in such strange adventures. She dances well though one misses some of the brilliance of the role's creator.

The *pas de six* for Dragonflies and Flowers is very well danced, particularly by Jeffrey Kovel and Marilyn Burr, and amounts to the best thing in the whole ballet. For ome reason the *Lobster Quadrille*, which originally brought fame to the ballet, is now a ragged jumble.

The other roles continue to be given with greater integrity to Charnley rather than Carroll; Louis Godfrey has taken over the Knave of Hearts role (created by Trunoff) to which he seems eminently suited.

Fun undiminished

THE performance given by any company of any ballet can have its off-day but somehow *Symphony For Fun* retains all its initial freshness and the company always give it as though they really love to dance it. This is all the more remarkable because it invariably comes at the end of a long and exhausting programme.

Though there have been many cast changes since the work was first created over two years ago, the standard has never dropped. Jeanette Minty sometimes dances the role in the second movement, created by Noël Rossana, and very well too. She gives a clear-cut and nicely timed performance with all the split-second precision that any Charnley role demands. The only fault I could find was with her hair; pretty though it is it does need to be in line with the short "Symphony for Fun bob" which helps to give the ballet its own particular *chic*. Gilpin, as always, gives a lovely performance of the third movement which makes one think he would be equally at home in Martha Graham's company.

P.W.

Odette from Hungary

ON August 10 Kovach and Rabovsky gave their first performance in London as Odette and Siegfried in *Swan Lake, Act* 2. They dance a version of the roles in many ways unfamiliar to Western audiences which dispenses with some of the mime and also Benno's assistance in the *adagio*, and introduces a few strange new lifts. Like all their individual versions of roles so far seen, these were not choreographically so satisfying as those commonly extant in the West.

In view of this these two young dancers might well take heed of the maxim that when in Rome one does as the Romans do, and dance their roles in the versions current to the company with which they are performing. Their portrayals would almost certainly gain from the exchange, and they would obviously fit far better into their surrounding company.

Kovach's Odette is a bird of somewhat exotic plumage, and not quite fully-fledged. She danced with a throbbing sincerity but insufficient poetry, more like a Fire-bird than a Swan-Queen, more an enchantress than one enchanted. *Swan Lake* is probably not her ballet, though one can see how the qualities she displays could be used elsewhere. She must however guard against her tendency to exploit difficulty instead of ease. In her variation, as in Act I of *The Nutcracker*, she executed a long series of vertiginous turns which had not much more relationship with the music than they had with the interpretation of the role.

Rabovsky is not physically ideally suited to *premier danseur* roles, so it is more to his credit that he acquitted himself well as Siegfried. He walked badly, but mimed with clarity and conviction, and partnered with a well-mannered strength. He also showed commendable restraint in not dancing a variation. The roles of Odette and Siegfried have also been danced by Marilyn Burr with Polajenko, and Wright with Gilpin.

C.B.

FILM
TRIO BALLET

The Flames of Paris

THE disappointment felt by the non-appearance of the Soviet dancers in London was, in a minor degree, offset by the showing of the latest ballet film to be made in the USSR. At the Rialto Cinema, London, it was possible to see fragments from *The Flames of Paris*, *Fountain of Bakhchisarai* and *Swan Lake*. The dance world of London with little else to do spend most of July arguing as to the merits and demerits of ballet in Russia today.

Futile argument really because until we see the great contemporary stars of Russia surrounded by a full-size company, it is impossible to pass any fair judgment. After all if the world judged the stars of British ballet by the incredibly indifferent films in which they have appeared we should rank pretty low in the annals of the dance. The fact that the Soviet dancers made any impression at all in a film is very much to their credit.

What we saw of *The Flames of Paris* did not awake any desire to become more closely acquainted with it. King Louis, it seemed, was plotting to crush the French revolution. In order to defend the republic, a battalion from Marseilles assaulted the Tuilleries where a ball was in progress. Finally the people are victorious and the ballet ended with a divertissement in celebration. Mercifully the divertissement included that fine male dancer—Vaktang Chabukiani. Hampered by an unbecoming costume, he danced with a virility and ease that seems to be the hall-mark of the best Russian male dancers.

Margot Fonteyn in the solo specially created for her by Frederick Ashton for the Granada Festival, The Entry of Madame Butterfly. *The costume was designed by Christian Dior.*
Photo: Torres Molina

The choreography of Vainonen was in the main part undistinguished though some Bournonville-like ensembles used French folk-dance steps in an ingenious way. It was all curiously old-fashioned and I cannot help feeling that they must feel the same way about it in Russia.

Fountain of Bakhchisarai

THE Russian ballet first conquered Europe with Tartar dances and it looks as though they could do the same thing again whenever they chose. *Fountain of Bakhchisarai* opens with a whole horde of Tartars leaping and twirling and a mighty fine spectacle it makes. Pushkin's poem about an abducted princess whose purity captures the heart of her captor—Khan Girei—and who finally meets her death at the hands of the jealous Zarema, appears to make a good ballet synopsis.

As the captive Princess Maria, Galina Ulanova showed what a magnificent actress she is. Though not endowed with great beauty she nevertheless convinces one that kingdoms might rise and fall on her account. She is one of the most lyrical dancers I have ever seen and there is poetry in every tiny movement of her hands. Her death is the most moving I have ever seen from any ballerina in any ballet.

Ulanova's great tragedy is that she never seems to have had a choreographer worthy of her. The other great ballerinas of our age have always had somebody—Karsavina had Fokine, Fonteyn has Ashton—but the modern Soviet choreographers have in no way assisted Ulanova. She has reached her position by being a born artist and by her obvious intelligence.

Other outstanding performances, in *Fountain of Bakchisarai*, came from Maya Plesetskaya, whose solo of rage is so forceful that it should really have been given to a male dancer. When the time comes for a successor to Ulanova, I would say, judging by the fragments one has seen in films, that here she is. She has the beauty of a Tchernicheva and the attack of a Marjorie Tallchief.

Gusev as Khan Girei gave one of those performances of mime which seem to abound in every company East of the Rhine. It was a most difficult role to make convincing and yet never, for a second, did it appear anything other than perfectly natural.

Zakharov's choreography was adequate but it remained with the artists to make it live.

Ulanova's Odette

WE have seen several excerpts from *Swan Lake*, in the various films which have reached us from Russia, but this latest film shows more than we have seen before. The fragment from the first act showed part of the Waltz (the *pas de six* at the Wells), the arrival of the Queen Mother and the end of the act. Hard to form any real impression except that the Queen Mother was a more pleasant person than the ill-tempered lady we are used to; the mime was very clear.

Some Disneyish swans and owls took away the romantic feeling from the opening of the second act but the arrival of Ulanova-Odette soon put that right. There were moments of breath-taking beauty and others not so good. In the *adage* she gave us plenty of her famous *attibesques* (the only way to describe a mixture of *attitude* and *arabesque*) and when she is supported they are wonderful, particularly in the way the working-leg enfolds the cavalier. It is when she is not supported, in a *jeté*, that these *attibesques* seem curiously stuccato; they destroy the flowing line.

Another innovation in the *adage* is a lovely lift when Odette appears to be doing a *jeté* over the Prince's shoulder. But perhaps it is in her moments of repose that Ulanova proclaims what a great artist she is.

The Black Swan in Act III was danced by Dudinskaya with a great deal of flashy attack but little else. No Prince surely could be so stupid as to mistake this lady for the girl he met by the lake.

At the ball we were shown the Spanish dance, not much better choreographed than ours but so much better danced that at last there seemed to be some sense in it. The Venetian dance was excellent, particularly sensitively given by the male dancer whose name we were not given. The Czardas and Mazurka were not shown.

In the final act I missed some of the beautiful groups which make this scene in the Sadler's Wells version possibly the best in the ballet; here again Ulanova carried the day. In the end, the Prince and Von Rothbart enter into mortal combat on a high cliff, a tidal wave submerges the scene and the swans return to human form in not very pretty nightdresses.

For those who wish to pick holes, there were plenty that could be picked all through the film. But for those who seriously want to discover what is good in present Soviet ballet, then there was much to think about.

The sheer love of dancing

IN the three works it was obvious that the Russians dance for the sheer love of dancing. Those who believe that dancing should only be strictly academic, no doubt threw their hands up in horror. There was little of the "correctness" that we are having rammed down our throats as being the only thing that theatrical dancing should be. I do not believe that the present Soviet dancers have had anything other than a strict classical training; but having mastered it they then forget it. It has always been the same in every branch of art—music, painting or writing. After all, who is to say what is right or wrong? Had any of us discovered the truth we should not be floundering about in the way that we are.

The fact remains that whether the Soviet dancers perform according to the dictates we have been brought up to or not, they give something exciting to the theatre. Surely this is of vital importance if ballet is to survive.

Full marks to S. Ivanov who photographed the film. He resorted to no clever angle-shots and the dance was presented in the way it always should be—without frills except under the tutus.

P.W.

TELEVISION

FESTIVAL BALLET in ALICE IN WONDERLAND

Given on July 12th; Choreography, Michael Charnley: Music, Joseph Horowitz; Conducted by Geoffrey Corbett: Costumes, Kenneth Rowell; Produced by Phillip Bate.

Cast

Narrator	ANTON DOLIN
Alice	BELINDA WRIGHT
The White Rabbit	JOHN GILPIN
The Mad Hatter	KEITH BECKETT
The March Hare	RONALD EMBLEM
The Dormouse	ANITA LANDA
The Knave of Hearts	LOUIS GODFREY
The Cheshire Cat	RUSSELL KERR
The Duchess	ROMA DUNCAN
The Cook	ANNE ROWSE
The Queen of Hearts	JANET OVERTON
The King of Hearts	PETER WHITE

BEFORE embarking on their summer season at the Royal Festival Hall, Anton Dolin decided that the time was ripe for his company to make their television debut in this country, for which they chose to do Michael Charnley's version of *Alice in Wonderland.* It is a large ballet, with a large cast, which is seen to its best advantage on a large stage; a fact which should have made one feel rather dubious as to its television suitabilities; however Philip Bate, the producer, was not to be daunted.

Anton Dolin introduced the programme, by giving a brief synopsis of the ballet, explaining that the story was a work that could be enjoyed if you were eight or eighty-five.

The opening shots of the ballet were very promising; Alice was discovered alone in a field, and the impression of her descent down the rabbit hole was admirably conveyed by the billowing of her skirts as the draught swept up from underneath; the "Drink Me" episode which followed was most amusing in portraying a rapidly diminishing Belinda Wright.

This high standard was not sustained for long; the remainder of the first scene suffered from overcrowding, with the result that the "Passing of the Baby" sequences were disorganised chaos.

The Father William scene could have been deleted with advantage as the whole action was in the distant background where one could scarcely see the figures of the Father and His Son. There was also a wealth of distracting action in the foreground; the only satisfactory answer was to close one's eyes and listen to Dolin's narration, which recorded exceptionally well.

The Waltz of the Dragonflies was by far the most successful and satisfying of the ballet's excerpts; the costumes provided a good contrast with the settings; the dancing itself maintained a high standard throughout, doing ample justice to Michael Charnley's choreography. There were also some good aerial shots of the dancers.

From the sublime to the unfortunately not sufficiently ridiculous, for the Mad-Hatters Tea-party was most unfunny; much of the "business" had been cut, leaving a rather bare skeleton. Despite all the efforts of Keith Beckett and Anita Landa, they laboured in vain to make us even smile.

The Lobster Quadrille, so successful on the stage, was another disappointment. One would have assumed the cameras would be positioned overhead so that they could show the patterns of the dance. This was not sufficiently

Moira Shearer and John Hart in the last act of The Sleeping Beauty *from the film* The Man who Loved Redheads (*based on Rattigan's play* Who is Sylvia?). *Shearer plays four different characters in the film and this is from the* 1929 *sequence.*
Photo: London Films

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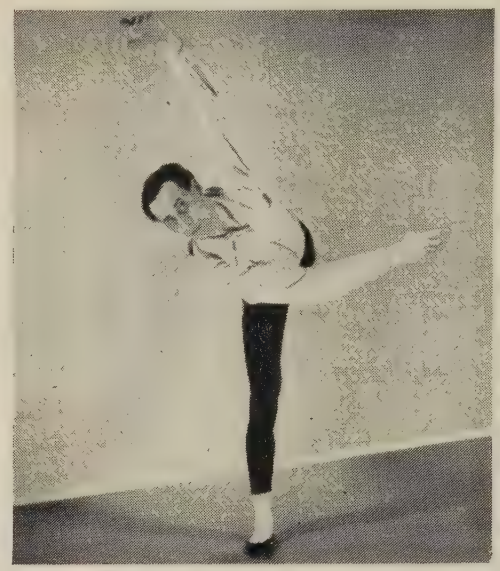

Malcolm Clare, principal dancer and choreographer Light Fantastic, was trained by Stella Karin.

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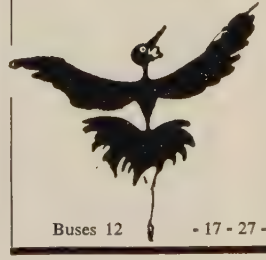

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well done, with the result that the Quadrille itself was not clearly enough defined.

The final courtroom scene which one would have thought least suited to television, was surprisingly effective; it was well danced and well photographed. Louis Godfrey, as the Knave of Hearts made the most of this unsatisfactory character; Belinda Wright played Alice throughout with that captivating air of bewildered charm.

The ballet ended in an anti-climax; for one missed that effective stage finale, with the flashing and flickering of the lights, which achieves a suitable dreamlike impression. The action just changed over to Alice's awakening, succeeded by Anton Dolin's awakening; his frantically blinking eyes brought the programme to its close.

The costumes of Kenneth Rowell, did not create quite such a favourable impression on the television screen as in the theatre; especially such characters as the White Rabbit and the Cheshire Cat whose costumes are predominantly light in colour. The stage itself, throughout the whole action was bathed in light; giving the impression that the dancers were performing on an ice rink.

Nicholas Baker.

BALLETS ET CHOEURS BASQUES ETORKI

FROM time to time we have seen Basque dances included in the various programmes of Spanish dances that have been shown in this country, but the company which opened a season at the Sadler's Wells Theatre on August 9, was the first company devoted entirely to the songs and dances of the Basque region.

There have been two popular Basque poets and they were both called d'Extahun—one born 400 years ago was responsible for some of the most beautiful poems in the Basque language, the other is a contemporary song writer who helped with the production of this company. Hence the title, *Le Livre d'Extahun*, of the opening number.

Divided into four sections—*Suite Navarraise*, *Danses Guerrieres* (war-like dances from Biscaye), *Caballeritos de Azkoitia* (aristocratic dances from Guipuzcoa) and *Baserrian* (country dances)—it was intended to show the variety and continuity of Basque folklore.

The opening dance from Oxtagabia was most effective with the slow procession around the stage representing the pilgrimage to Our Lady of Muskuldi. The central double-masked figure—"Bobo"—bore a strong similarity to the Jack-in-the-Green of our English folk dances; his costume would delight any French designer. The tempo changes and the dances become more lively with their high kicks and *tours en l'air* on flat feet.

What do these people think they are doing? Riding a bicycle race or something? Well in a sense, yes! They are members of Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet (Stanley Holden centre, Walter Trevor right) in The Cyclists episode from Alfred Rodrigues' new ballet Café des Sports *which should have had its English première at Sadler's Wells Theatre on September 9. Owing to the dispute with Equity, the season was cancelled* (see page 34).

A contrast is provided by *Danse des Pommes* when the girls move sedately playing with apples. In many ways this was reminiscent of the dance for the Princesses in Fokine's *Firebird*.

Unfortunately as this section wore on it became apparent that there is not really enough variety in Basque dances and steps to warrant a whole evening in the theatre being devoted to them. They were well presented as far as they went and there is a certain variety in the patterns of the dance but after about ten minutes it appears, if this whole production is representative, that we have run the gamut of the steps. Possibly the only way to make these dances an exciting theatrical spectacle would be to turn them into a display of mass-movement as did the Soviet Beryozka Company.

Many of the dances were accompanied by Polentzi Gezela, a Txistulari soloist, who plays on the Txistu (a flute) with his left hand while beating a drum with his right. The variety of sound obtained from such seemingly limited means was quite incredible. Gezela quite rightly scored the biggest success of the evening.

Beautiful also was the suite of Basque songs sung by the choir. The unfamiliar rhythms and melodies should have been an inspiration to any composer.

The remainder of the programme was made up to two "ballets"—*Andonine* and *Orhi Pian*—though actually they were scenas of songs and dances with little or no construction at all. *Andonine* (named after the Basque fishing port) contained the well-known *Aurresku* and the *Danse du Coffre*, a 500 year old casket dance given on the feast of St. Peter when a new mayor takes office.

In *Orhi Pian* (at the foot of the Pic d'Orhi) we had the dance in which members of the community each dance on and around a tumbler of wine. Otherwise this scene had little to offer as it was not produced with distinction.

P.W.

Dance and Dancers . . . ABROAD

AMERICA

Nora Kaye To Japan

AFTER completing a two-week engagement with Ballet Theatre in Washington, Nora Kaye flew to Japan on July 5th to be guest artist for a month with the Komaki Ballet with whom she appeared last year. Accompanying her was Antony Tudor, who is to choreograph a new work for her to music of Offenbach as well as mounting *Lilac Garden* for her there.

American Dance Festival

OCCURRING too late for review in this issue, the seventh American Dance Festival commenced on August 19th at Connecticut College, New London, Conn., with the world première of a new work by José Limon. Commisioned by Connecticut College, *The Traitor*, with a musical score by Gunther Schuller, was performed by an all-male cast headed by Limon and Lucas Hoving. Noteworthy, too, during this short season were the revivals of two early works by Doris Humphrey—*Soaring*, which was composed during the early nineteen-twenties while the choreographer was still a member of the Denishawn Company, and *Water Study*, created in 1930, an experimental group work with music.

Guest artists for this festival included Charles Weidman and Theatre Dance Company, Daniel Nagrin, Pauline Koner, Marageret Dietz and Yuriko. The latter, who is a member of Martha Graham's Dance Company, premièred a new piece, to music by Bartok, entitled *New Work* and also offered a revival of her solo *Tale of Seizure*.

Celtic Ballet at Jacob's Pillow

DURING late July The Celtic Ballet of Scotland, first Scottish dance company to visit America, paid a three week visit at Jacob's Pillow, Ted Shawn's celebrated dance theatre and school at Lee, Mass. Margaret Morris, star and artistic director of this group, was supported by feature dancers Bruce McClure, Andrew Rolla and Rena Steel. During this engagement the company presented three different programmes balanced in a selection of traditional and contemporary works. However, it was the traditional dances that made the greatest success with both the critical press and the public. In addition to this series of performances, Miss Morris conducted a three-week course in the dance education she has developed and gave a lecture-demonstration, assisted by members of the Celtic Ballet. Also, Bruce McClure and Andrew Rolla taught classes in Scottish Folk Dance.

Law Action on Choreographer's Rights

AN unusual law suit was recently instituted in Los Angeles against Jerome Robbins by the producers of the former Broadway musical hit *High Button Shoes* in which Mr. Robbins' dances played an integral part. The plaintiffs report that they have had offers for the screen rights from two film companies but that these have been blocked by the choreographer who refuses to relinquish his rights. In addition, the producers also claim that the choreography is part of the music, lyrics and book but according to the terms of Mr. Robbins' contract he claims that he has the same rights of ownership as an author. The outcome of this suit is eagerly awaited by the American dance profession since it appears more than likely that a new precedent may be established legally that can further protect choreographers' rights.

Ruth St. Denis Film Shorts

WORD has just been received from Hollywood that producer Warren Cheney plans to produce a series of colour dance film shorts of Ruth St. Denis. The first will be *Ballet of Light*, which was premièred at the Hollywood Bowl on August 3rd and which is, in Miss St. Denis' words "my tribute to Loie Fuller". Next on the agenda is Scriabin's *Poem of Ecstasy*. It is planned that the films of her earlier famous solos will follow.

On The Way To New York

AT the moment, the outlook for dance on Broadway is bright with many interesting productions in prospect. Hanya Holm has relinquished her interest in

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Fanny to take on the commitment of staging the dances for *The House of Flowers*, the Truman Capote-Harold Arlen show that is to star Pearl Bailey. In turn, James Starbuck has been appointed as choreographer for the Marcel Pagnol *Fanny* that is being adapted by S. N. Behrman and Harold Rome. The musical version of *Peter Pan*, starring Mary Martin and directed by Jerome Robbins, opens at the Winter Gardens later this month. And, as noted previously in these columns, Michael Kidd will provide the dances for *Silk Stockings*, the musical based on the film *Ninotchka* that will star Hildegarde Neff and Don Ameche.

Arthur Todd

FRANCE

PARIS OPÉRA

ON July 28th, Harald Lander's *Printemps à Vienne*, was first performed. This light and unpretentious work will be reviewed at greater length in a later issue. The music is the Second Symphony of Schubert, and the sets and costumes have been designed by Jean-Denis Maillart. Liane Daydé, Micheline Bardin and Youly Algaroff play the leading roles.

After short visits to Orange and Aix-les-Bains, the Paris Opéra ballet will have their well deserved vacation. They will then reappear at the Opéra in September before giving a short season at Covent Garden, at the same time that the Sadler's Wells Ballet dance at the Opéra: a happy and historic exchange worthy of the Cinquentary of the Entente Cordiale, which will be particularly welcomed by the balletomanes of the two cities.

FESTIVALS

BEFORE the great wall of the Theatre Antique of Orange, Nina Vyroubova, Madeleine Lafon, Josette Clavier and Youly Algaroff, accompanied by a number of dancers from the *corps de ballet* of the Opéra, danced in the Lifar-Cocteau-Auric ballet *Phèdre* on July 31.

AN exceptional effort on the part of the municipality of Aix-les-Bains has resulted in the organisation of an International Dance Festival on the banks of Lac Bourget. On August 1 the Paris Opéra ballet, with Christiane Vaussard, Liane Daydé, Claude Bessy, Serge Lifar, Michel Renault and Raoul Bari, gave *Suite Romantique, Prélude a l'après-midi d'un faune, Le Lac des Cygnes* (Act II), *Prière, Roméo et Juliette*, and *Suite en Blanc*.

In the course of this programme, which will be given from a floating stage on the lake, a new work by Lifar will be created, *Les Pas et les Lignes*, a ballet for two dancers to Dubussy's *Petite Suite*. On August 3, the same artists, joined by Nina Vyroubova, Madeleine Lafon and Max Bozzoni, danced at the Théâtre de Verdure in a programme consisting of *Scénes de la Foret, Giselle* (Act II), *Entre Deux Rondes, La Mort du Cygne, Les Pas et les Lignes, Guignol et Pandore*, and extracts from *Divertissement*. The orchestra was conducted by Richard Blareau. The artists of the Opéra, however, were not the only guests On July 31, the Dancers of Martinique appeared; the evening of August 2 was devoted to Spanish dancing; and that of August 4 brought together Svetlana Beriosova and David Blair, Rhada, the Hindu dancer who was so admired in Jean Renoir's film *The River*, Birget Akesson from Sweden, Paul d'Arnot and his companions from Uruguay, and Miho Hanayugui's Japanese dancers.

ON August 7 and 8, the Ballet of the Royal Amsterdam Opera gave two different programmes consisting of works by Françoise Adret. The ballets included *Quatre Mouvements* (music by Haydn), *Apollon Musagète* (music by Stravinsky), and *Le Canapé* (music by the Dutch composer Andriesson, sets by Nicolas Wijnberg).

THIS year again, the ballet company of the Strasbourg Opera will be the guests of the town of Vichy, where on September 10 they will appear in a gala performance consisting of *Istar, Les Noces de Cendres* (music by Tomasi), *Bolero* (music by Ravel), the principal dancers being Ethery Pagava, Geneviève Moulin and Roland April.

FINALLY, at Bezancon, the Paris Opéra ballet will give two gala performances at the Music Festival on September 11 and 12.

MARCEL MARCEAU

EACH year, just before the holiday season when the theatres shut their doors, Marcel Marceau returns to Paris, and his company of mimes, weary of interminable tours across Europe then draws a new enthusiasm from its warm contact with the public on the very ground of its first successes. With the abolition of useless words, the art of silence resumes its sway, and this international language unites with a common bond of understanding, whether in laughter or in tears, foreigners, provincials and Parisians.

Situated in the very neighbourhood of the Boulevard du Crime, where a century ago Deburau, the King of the Funambules, covered himself with glory, the Théâtre de la Renaissance welcomed Marceau and his company at the beginning of June. No novelties were shown during this season, but three different programmes enabled one to taste again, at leisure, the multiple aspects of Marceau's art.

Le Manteau, inspired by Gogol, *Pierre de Montmartre*, a tribute to the Pierrot of Willette, and *Les Trois Perruques* founded on a play by Nestroy, were pantomimes or mimodramas seen before, but now given greater polish by incessant study, and clarified by subtle revisions. The first of these works still evokes, in the manner of Kafka, the purgatory of office life, the obsession with social considerations symbolised by the purchase of the overcoat, and the fall or the theft of the coat.

The second, which is fresher and more naive, traces the pathetic story of Pierrot from his painter's studio in Montmartre to the hulks, where he is led by his love for a frivolous Columbine.

Finally, the last work, more in the spirit of caricature and fantasy, proclaims the triumph of reality over illusion, which is represented by three wigs, one black, one blonde, one white, under which the red-haired man vainly tries to disguise himself.

Each shade of feeling, each state of mind is conveyed by gestures which are restrained but always convincing. In this silent art, frills are superfluous, even dangerous; the expression must be precise and must impress without ambiguity. While a number of stylised characters fill the background, the personal problem of the hero is unfolded with an unchanging progression in the forefront of the stage. It is the rhythm of the work which is all important and which captures and holds the interest of the spectator.

The originality of Marceau's style lies in the fact that it demands no particular knowledge on the part of the spectator. Gestures do not, as in the Oriental techniques, have fixed meanings, and this gives a wider range of expression and allows a greater scope for feeling, which accords with present-day Western ideas. The evocation still remains direct and vivid.

Diverging more and more from Chaplin, the "Bip" sketches seem to grow clearer with time. If *David and Goliath*, giant and dwarf personified almost simultaneously by a Bip stretched out or hunched up according to the character, displays a surprising virtuosity, the *Butterfly Chase*, to our taste, contains more feeling.

The *Exercises de Style* give Marcel Marceau the opportunity of giving some brilliant demonstrations, such as *Les Tireurs de Cordes*, while the tryptique, *Adolescence, Maturite, Vieillesse* reveals the young and already very real talent of Gilles Ségal, the Harlequin of the company, whose *Douche*, with an elusive bar of soap, develops his qualities as a comedian.

The whole company, formed by Marceau, is now, after several years' work, achieving a remarkable cohesion and homogenuity. The male elements particularly have acquired a greater technical mastery.

Marie-Françoise Christout

SPAIN

Santander and San Sebastian Festivals

IN San Sebastian I saw some very good Basque dancing in its natural surrounding, on the occasion of the 1st International Film Festival. All over the Basque country there are scores of groups of boys and girls dancing and singing according to the rich and picturesque folklore of the region. Many of these groups appeared every night, on platforms in the public squares of San Sebastian, to entertain foreign visitors and locals who crowded around them. The best was called "Goizaldi" and is the most important in San Sebastian as upholder of the best Basque tradition. Some of its members have already appeared abroad with other groups.

From folklore we passed, through a hundred miles of Cantabrian sea coast, to Santander where, until September, there is an International Arts Festival. The series opened with the Helsinki National Ballet starring Elsa Sylvertesson, Irina Hudova and Doris Laine. They appeared in the huge open air theatre for a few nights. More than 6,000 people filled the place and applauded everything from *Swan Lake* to the new *En Saga* (music by Sibelius) which Sylvertesson had choreograped with clear-cut movements given by the whole company. The light pastel coloured costumes were very effective. We got the impression that everybody was dancing in an holiday spirit; which perhaps was right as the Finnish dancers are here during their month official vacation.

Late in the season the Spanish ballet of Marianela de Montijo with Antonio Rosado will appear in Santander.

DANCER Antonio and his company have left, by sea, for Buenos Aires from where they will start a long tour of Latin countries eventually bringing them to the United States next February.

DANCER Rosario, with Roberto Iglesias, has had triumphant seasons in South America, but will come back perhaps before Christmas for a season at the Madrid Teatro Espanol. It is rumoured that she will receive a decoration from the Spanish Government and the coveted Annual Dance Prize for 1954.

Cyril Homs

AUSTRALIA

Poll for Borovansky

PINEAPPLE POLL, personally reproduced for the Borovansky Ballet by Cranko, opened with tremendous enthusiasm and played to capacity houses. Cranko, in a curtain speech, praised the Borovansky Company and Australian dancers but attacked the Australian press for sending along journalists (including one sporting writer) unqualified to write about ballet in terms other than leaps or spins. Consequently the press were rather lukewarm in their reviews of *Poll*.

Kathleen Gorham (flown out specially for this ballet) and Peggy Sager alternated in the title role. Sager, a stronger dancer than the part warrants, was the most amusing and interesting. At first Gorham underplayed to the extent of contributing little more than her presence but improved greatly at later performances. Paul Grinwis, the most interesting and versatile artist in the company, was a delightfully dignified Captain Belaye; he never allowed his work to degenerate into buffoonery. In fact the whole ballet centered on his performance. Tom Merrifield as the Pot-Boy had a role that was his good fortune and June Florenz was excellent as the near-sighted Aunt. The Osbert Lancaster décor was faithfully reproduced.

Imports of varying quality

THE imported principals have on the whole proved rather disappointing. Peggy Sager, Vassili Trunoff

(*continued on page* 33)

A scene from Harald Lander's recent ballet, Printemps à Vienne, *at the Paris Opéra. The music is Schubert's Second Symphony, the designs are by Maillart. Liane Daydé is seen centre. This work will be included in the repertoire when the Paris Opéra comes to Covent Garden in September.* *Photo: Fred Brommet*

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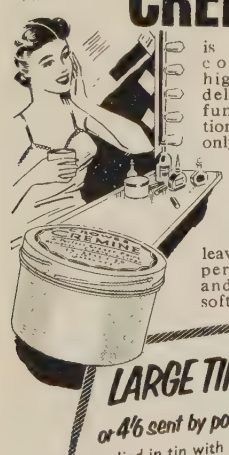

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★ See also displayed advertisements

(*continued from page* 31)
and Paul Grinwis virtually carried the burden of the dancing, although there is much talent in the *corps* that nobody will ever know about. Except as the Street Dancer in *Le Beau Danube*, Claudie Algeranova has not been a great asset and many of her roles have since been taken over by Kathleen Gorham.

Kiril Vassilkovsky has been particularly valuable not as a dancer but as a producer of *Symphonie Fantastique* and *Graduation Ball*. Borovansky has a passion for Russian revivals so Vassilkovsky will probably be called upon to revive *Raymonda*.

Voltaire in ballet

VASSILKOVSKY'S own ballet, *Candide*, transformed Voltaire's pungent satire into a rather charming but abbreviated love-story. Unfortunately the music selected was from Rossini overtures and consequently lacked variety being mostly *allegro* music. At times there seemed to be far too many steps for the music. The success of the ballet was due to William Constable's décor in shades of lilac, grey, black and white; also to the fact that Vassilkovsky departed from Borovansky's policy of using as many dancers as the stage will hold but relied on a small and talented cast.

His choreography failed to give Paul Hammond and Olga Purves, as Pangloss and the Old Woman, any indication whatever of the character in their steps. In spite of this, they managed extremely well in these difficult roles though they were largely forced to rely on facial expression. Trunoff was a naive, but vigorous Candide and Sager was an appropriately demure Cunegonde.

Spirited Igor

TRUNOFF'S spirited production of *Prince Igor* allowed the company to demonstrate their qualities of enthusiasm vigour and energy which in no small way compensated for the horribly vandalised version of *Coppèlia* which appeared in the same programme. Algeranova danced Swanilda with life and expression but she seemed to be lacking in style.

E. C. Mason

NEW ZEALAND

Festival in Aukland

THIS year's Aukland Festival outstripped all expectations both from the booking queues and for the general enthusiasm for the ballet. The main attraction was the opportunity of seeing the two one-time local dancers, Rowena Jackson and Bryan Ashbridge (on leave from the Sadler's Wells Ballet) who have scored such a success overseas.

They danced together on the first night in *Swan Lake*, Act II, and such was the enthusiasm at His Majesty's Theatre that the audience stamped and whistled for almost ten minutes shouting "we want Rowena". Silence was only achieved when it was announced that Jackson and Ashbridge would appear again at the end of the programme. There is no doubt that the appearance of these two dancers for nine performances in their native country was a great triumph for them and has also done much to arouse further interest in ballet in New Zealand.

As in last year's festival, the direction of the ballet section was in the hands of Daphne Kirner (late Metropolitan Ballet, Empire Ballet etc.). Married to a New Zealander, she has made a considerable impression on the ballet scene in Aukland in the two years she has been here. This season included no less than three examples of her own choreography one repeat from last year's season by popular request.

No National Ballet yet?

THE enthusiasm of the local dancers, all amateurs, is beyond praise. After their day's work they slog away at rehearsals for months, just for one week's season. Local standards are rising rapidly and we all look forward to the days when it will be possible to form a permanent ballet company.

Judging from the remarks of several dancers who have recently returned from London, an impression seems to be growing in the ballet world that New Zealand already has a professional company. This may be possibly due to a local school group calling themselves by a title suggesting that they are a national company. Unfortunately it is still impossible for a ballet dancer to earn a living here other than by teaching; a state of affairs which, with New Zealand's small population and love of outdoor life, is likely to continue for many years.

George Gower Coombes.

Ballet Correspondents

(Abbreviations: b.c.—ballet correspondence; m.—male; f.—female; m.a.—my age; o.i.—other interests; ls.—languages; p.r.—photograph requested).

PETER BASSETT, 17 Chestnut Glen, Hornchurch, Essex, wants b.c. m. or f. anywhere, (esp. London), m.a. 16, o.i. theatre, music and reading.

PATRICIA FINDLAY-WILSON, 269, Crescent Drive, Petts Wood, Kent, wants b.c. f, age 28-30, in France or Italy. o.i. music, art, reading, sport, languages. ls. some French.

PETER D. WALKER, The Forest Laundry, Broad Lane, Bracknell, Berks, wants b.c., m, in London or Southern England, age 20-23. m.a. 21, o.i. theatre, music, photography. p.r. all answered.

MR. TAW FRANKWORTH, 6, Houndsden Road, London, N.21, wants b.c., m. age 18-21, in London area. m.a. 19, s.i. theatre. o.i. all arts, television, films, radio, people and philosophy. p.r.

MARGARET KNIGHT, 1A, Kimberley Avenue, Nunhead, London, S.E.15, wants b.c., m. or f, age 14-16, in Copenhagen, Vienna or Milan. m.a. 14½, o.i. music, poetry, painting, Shakespeare, reading. Ballet student preferred.

EVA HUSZAR, Mitchell Crest, 58, Mitchell Street, Berea, Johannesburg, S. Africa, wants b.c., m. or f, any age. m.a. 16. o.i. acting, reading, opera, travel, music.

CAROLA HORSFALL, 47, Doone Street, Lynmouth, New Plymouth, New Zealand, wants b.c., m, age 17-20, anywhere, but prefer U.S.A., Eire, France, New Zealand or Europe. m.a. 17½. o.i. all dancing, music, films, correspondence, reading. ls. French. all answered.

JANET BELL, 72, Riverside Road, Sidcup, Kent, wants b.c., m. or f, age 17-20, anywhere, esp. U.S.A., Spain, Denmark, m.a. 16. o.i. reading, sports. p.r.

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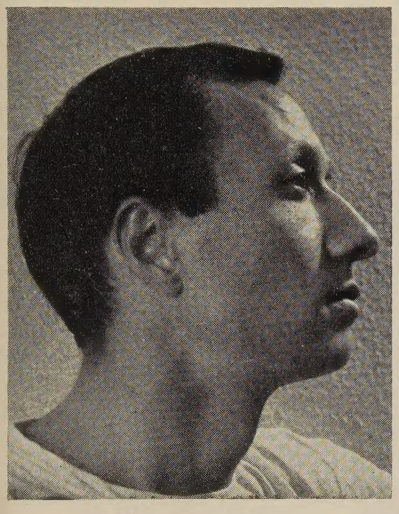


Guillermo Keys Arenas

MEXICO

THOUGH summertime in New York usually finds dancing at a stand-still, such is not the case, at the present, in Mexico City. Word freshly received from the dance capital of Mexico indicates a fervour of activity as well as important news of an international award.

Guillermo Keys Arenas, the young Mexican dancer-choreographer, who spent three months in New York City in 1951 under a dance scholarship awarded by the Institute of International Education, has just been granted a year's scholarship to study in Paris, beginning in September, by the Institute Francais d'Amerique Latine.

Obviously, this reward has come as a result of Mr. Arenas' recent dance works that have been commended so strongly in the Mexican press over the past three years. Recently, for instance, he has choreographed *El Chueco* (The Cripple) for the Teatro de los Insurgentes and this work was also performed at the Academia de la Danza Mexicana in a special performance of the Ballet Mexicano.

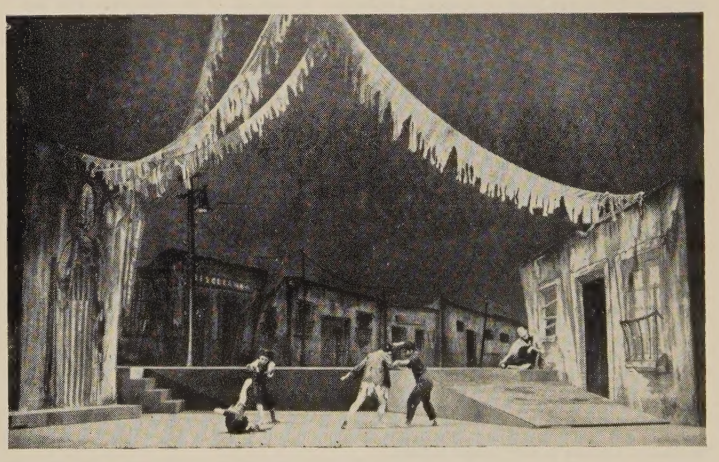
Also, there has been *Nocturnos*, to a score by Debussy, for another in a series of Ballet Mexicano programmes. In addition, there has been *Fecundidad* (Fecundity) and *La Poseida* (The Possessed), with the choreographer performing a major role in the latter work.

Arenas' most recent work in Mexico City has been the choreography for Offenbach's *Orpheus In The Underworld*, which has been running since May 20. Before leaving for Paris he is mounting a new ballet for the Academia de la Danza Mexicana to music by Salvador Moreno and décor by Antonio Lopez Mancera.

Arthur Todd.

Salvador Juarez, Valentina Castro and Ana Myridá in Fecundity *to the music of improvised percussion.*

A scene from The Possessed (*Music, Silvestre Revueltas. Designs by Antonio López Mancera*). *Dancers in the centre, Raquel Gulierrez as the Possessed and G. K. Arenas as Him.*
Right. The Cripple (*music, Bernal Jiménez. Designs, A. L. Mancera*). *Photos: Jorge Gutierrez*



Ballet Dates

FESTIVAL BALLET
at Royal Festival Hall

August
23-28 *Concerto* (Grieg), *Vision of Marguerite, Don Quixote, Vilia*
30 to Sept. 1 *Giselle, Napoli*
2-4 *The Nutcracker, Napoli*
6-11 *La Esmeralda*
13 The Palace, Manchester (two weeks)

Tour of Canada and America
October
12 Quebec
13 Ottawa
14-16 Montreal
18-20 Toronto
21-23 Detroit
25-31 Chicago

BALLET RAMBERT

August
16 Birmingham Repertory, Birmingham (3 weeks)
September
6 Civic Theatre, Chesterfield
13 Marlowe Theatre, Canterbury
20 Gaiety, Dublin (2 weeks)

SADLER'S WELLS BALLET
at Covent Garden

August
31 *Boutique Fantasque, Firebird, Three-Cornered Hat*
Sept. 1-2 *Sylphides, Homage to the Queen, Mam'zelle Angot*
3 *Sylphides, Homage to the Queen, Boutique Fantasque*
4(M) *Sylphides, Firebird, Three-Cornered Hat*
4(E) *Mam'zelle Angot, Firebird, Boutique Fantasque*
6 *Boutique Fantasque, Firebird, Three-Cornered Hat*
7 *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Elvin, Field)
8 *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Jackson, Field)
9 *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Fonteyn, Somes)
10 *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Nerina, Rassine)
11(M) *Patineurs, Mam'zelle Angot, Homage to the Queen*
11(E) *Sleeping Beauty* (Nerina, Rassine)
13 *Mam'zelle Angot, Firebird, Daphnis and Chloe*
14 *Mam'zelle Angot, Firebird Daphnis and Chloe*
15 *Sleeping Beauty* (Elvin, Hart)
16 *Patineurs, Daphnis and Chloe, Homage to the Queen*
17 *Sleeping Beauty* (Beriosova, Field)
18(M) *Sleeping Beauty* (Fonteyn, Somes)
18(E) *Giselle* (Heaton, Field), *Three-Cornered Hat*
20 *Sylphides, Firebird, Boutique Fantasque*
21 *Three-Cornered Hat, Firebird, Boutique Fantasque*
22 *Giselle* (Clayden, Rassine), *Boutique Fantasque*
23 *Sylphides, Firebird, Boutique Fantasque*
24 *Coppelia* (Lindsay, Doyle)
25(M) *Coppelia* (Dale, Shaw)
25(E) Theatre National de l'Opéra, Paris (2 weeks) Repertoire includes: *Sleeping Beauty, Swan Lake, Les Patineurs, Homage to the Queen, Tiresias, Daphnis and Chloe, Mam'zelle Angot,* etc.
October
13-18 La Scala, Milan
20-26 Teatro dell 'Opera, Rome
28 San Carlo, Naples
November
2-5 approx. Palermo

This continental tour will be followed immediately by an English provincial tour lasting until mid-December when the company returns to Covent Garden.

CONTEMPORARY DANCE THEATRE
at Toynbee Hall Theatre

September
6 Eleanor King (famous American Modern dancer) with Robert Smith (American concert pianist)

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with the Dia-Lucca Ballet (soloists, Grete Sellier and Harald Horn)

August 16 to Sept. 4 The Stoll Theatre, London
6 Theatre Royal, Newcastle
13 Theatre Royal, Glasgow (two weeks)
27 Her Majesty's, Aberdeen
October
4 King's Theatre, Edinburgh
11 Opera House, Blackpool
18 Opera House, Manchester (two weeks)

SADLER'S WELLS THEATRE BALLET

Provincial Tour subject to dispute being settled
September
20 Theatre Royal, Newcastle
27 Theatre Royal, Glasgow
October
4 Her Majesty's, Aberdeen
11 Lyceum Theatre, Sheffield
18 Theatre Royal, Nottingham
25 Grand Theatre, Leeds

LE BALLET DU THEATRE NATIONAL DE L'OPERA DE PARIS
at Covent Garden

September
28 *Variations, Les Mirages, Les Indes Galantes* (Tableau des fleurs), *Le Palais de Christal*
29 *Grand Pas, Les Indes Galantes, Phedre Printempts a Vienne*
30 *Suite en Blanc, Prelude a l'Apres-Midi d'un Faune, Les Indes Galantes*
October
1 *Entre deux Rondes, Icare, Les Indes Galantes, Les Danses du Prince Igor, Etudes.*
2 *Suite en Blanc, Icare, Les Indes Galantes, Les Danses du Prince Igor*
4 *Le Palais de Cristal, Istar, Les Indes Galantes, Etudes*
5 *Nauteos, Entre deux Rondes, L'Oiseau de Feu, Printemps a Vienne*
6 *Grand Pas, Icare, Les Mirages, Etudes*
7 *Variations, Romeo et Juliette, Nauteos, Suite en Blanc*
8 *Le Palais de Cristal, Guignol et Pandore, Istar, Printemps a Vienne*
9 *Les Mirages, Phedre, Suite en Blanc*
11 *Palais de Cristal, L'Oiseau de Feu, Etudes*

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September
2-3-7 *Sonata in D* (Music, Mozart, Choreography, Perrottet; Decor, Gaston) *Celeste and Celestinha* (Music, Seixas; Choreography, Darrell; Decor Douglas Smith).
9-10-14 *Die Tote Geleibte* (Music, Schumann; Choreography, Perrottet; Decor, Cordwell) *Celeste and Celestinha.*
16, 17, 21 New Ballet, *Sonata in D.*
23, 24, 28, 30, Oct. 1 Programmes to be announced later.

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SADLER'S WELLS THEATRE BALLET DISPUTE

AS most readers know by now, the season of Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet which should have taken place from September 9 to 18, had to be cancelled owing to a dispute between Equity and the Sadler's Wells management about the dancers' salaries. At the moment of going to press, both the company's provincial tour and indeed its very continuance is problematical. As we do not know the full facts of both sides of this question we are publishing the statement issued by British Actors' Equity Association on August 17. Next month we hope to be able to publish full statements from all parties.

(1) The Theatre Ballet Company itself has established an outstanding international reputation and has just returned from a highly successful tour of South Africa.

The salaries paid in the company, notwithstanding individual increases made from time to time, have wholly failed to keep pace with this development. In the last season, there were dancers still receiving the national minimum of £7 after two years in the company and others receiving no more than £8 10s. after six years.

(2) The dancers' original request was for an all-round increase of not less than £2 per week. In the hope of reaching agreement with the management, they have reduced this request to 30s. In addition to the requested all-round increase, there have been discussions on a minimum scale of salaries to be paid in the company generally. Under this heading also the dancers have been prepared to make considerable concessions and are now willing to accept a scale of £7 for newcomers rising to £9 per week by six-monthly increments of 10s. This scale is lower than the scale applied by the same management to its opera chorus. Opera choristers begin at £7 rising to £8 after three months, to £9 for a second year and to £9 10s. for a third year. The ballet salaries may also be compared with salaries paid to chorus artists in the West End of London. Though the national minimum for once-nightly performances is £7, there are few chorus dancers in West End musical comedy receiving less than £10 per week.

(3) The statement attributed to a spokesman of the management in today's "Times" alleges that Equity is seeking to dictate what the salaries must be and is making itself a judge of the individual merits of particular dancers. This is nonsense. Equity does not seek to dictate nor does it set itself up as a judge of the individual professional merits of its members. The request now made to the Sadler's Wells management is one made spontaneously by the dancers themselves who have asked Equity to act as their spokesman. The Council of Equity, when faced with such a request, always considers the matter with care, and on this occasion has made it clear to the management that in its opinion the request of the dancers is moderate and reasonable and that the all-round increase which they require is fully justified by the status of the company, irrespective of any additional increases which the management may feel justified in offering to individual dancers in accordance with their personal merits.

(4) We believe that the public generally have been unaware that the level of salaries paid to dancers is so low. There is a growing public awareness of the high degree of discipline, devotion and hard work continuously required of a professional ballet dancer and of the fact that the professional life of a dancer is comparatively short.

(5) One statement attributed to the management appears to suggest that the management contemplates asking the Sadler's Wells Opera Company to perform on the days originally allotted to the ballet company in the forthcoming season. We hope that there is no foundation for this report since it would be regrettable if the management were to face the members of the Opera Company with the embarrassment of a request or an instruction that they replace their colleagues.

COVER STORIES

This month's front cover, by Baron, is of Svetlana Beriosova in the first act of *The Sleeping Beauty* with the Sadler's Wells Ballet.

BERIOSOVA was born in Kaunas, Lithuania. At the age of two she went with her father, Nicholas Beriosoff (now ballet master and choreographer with Festival Ballet) to Monte Carlo where he was a soloist with René Blum's Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo. So from the earliest possible age, Beriosova was brought up to the great tradition of the Russian Ballet having always before her the most famous ballerinas of the time—Danilova, Nemchinova etc. Touring the world with that company, she made her first appearance on the stage as Little Clara in *Casse Noisette.* It was not until after the war that she emerged as a dancer in the Marquis de Cuevas company then forming in Monte Carlo. In 1947 she came to England where she immediately became the ballerina of Metropolitan Ballet which had just been formed. During the three years of that company's existence, Beriosova took over all the major roles and quickly became very popular with the British public. Roles were created for her by John Taras in *Designs with Strings,* by Frank Staff in *Fanciulla delle Rose* and by Andrée Howard in *Ballementos.*

After Metropolitan Ballet disbanded, Beriosova joined the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet and as joint ballerina with Elaine Fifield toured America during the winter of 1951-52. At the end of 1952 she was moved up to the Sadler's Wells Ballet at Covent Garden. Since then she has gradually started to take on important roles starting with the Lilac Fairy in *The Sleeping Beauty.*

It was soon obvious that Beriosova was ideally suited to the larger company and the larger stages upon which the Sadler's Wells Ballet play. In 1953, John Cranko created the principal role in *The Shadow* for her and both she and the ballet have enjoyed a great success with it, particularly in England. She has taken, over with success the roles of The Young Wife in *Don Juan,* The Queen of the Water in *Homage to the Queen* and La Favorita in *Veneziana.* Her Swanilda in *Coppelia* has justly been acclaimed and she has given an excellent Odette in *Lac des Cygnes,* Act II, with Philip Chatfield. It is rumoured that by the end of the year we shall see her in the full-length ballet. But the real test of Beriosova came with her debut as Princess Aurora in *The Sleeping Beauty* this summer. That she gave an outstanding performance in this difficult classical role raises hopes that Beriosova's future is very bright indeed.

This month's back cover, also by Baron, is of David Poole and Maryon Lane of The Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet in Alfred Rodrigues' *Blood Wedding* (based on the play of Garcia Lorca) which had such a success during the company's recent tour of South Africa.

MARYON LANE was born in Melmoth, Zululand. She first trained in New Zealand and later in Johannesburg with Pauline Stokes. In 1946 she came to England and was awarded a scholarship to the Sadler's Wells School where she remained for a year. In 1947 she joined the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet and from that time has worked her way up gradually to become the ballerina she is today. She led the company during their recent tour of South Africa. Her most important roles have been Odette in *Swan Lake,* The Betrayed Girl in *Rake's Progress,* in *Reflection, Blood Wedding* and in the new Rodrigues' ballet *Café des Sports.*

DAVID POOLE was born in Capetown, South Africa, in 1925. He trained with Dulcie Howes and Cecily Robinson at the University of Capetown. He was the leading male dancer with the Capetown University Ballet and with the Capetown Ballet Club. He created the role of the Soldier in Cranko's first ballet—Stravinsky's *Soldier's Tale.* Coming to England in 1947 he joined the Sadler's Wells School, entering the Theatre Ballet in the same year. Since then he has created many roles and has proved to be one of the best character dancers and mimes in British ballet.

NEXT MONTH

Look for Yvette Chauviré on the front cover of the October DANCE AND DANCERS.
In this issue will be a history of the Paris Opera Ballet (appearing at Covent Garden in September) during the Second Empire by IVOR GUEST.
The production of *The Sleeping Beauty* in Russia by EVAN SENIOR.
Pictures and opinions on the revival of Fokine's *Firebird* by The Sadler's Wells Ballet; on Harald Lander's revival of Bournonville's *Napoli* for Festival Ballet; and on the most recent words—*Nauteos* and *Printemps à Vienne* by the Paris Opéra.
The Diaghilev Exhibition at Edinburgh by PETER WILLIAMS.
A further article by A. V. COTON based on the Noverre letters.
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